



UNIVERSIDADE
CATÓLICA
PORTUGUESA

**THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL AND ARTISTIC
PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE PORTRAYAL OF REALITY**

Internship report submitted to the Universidade Católica Portuguesa
to obtain the Master's degree in Culture Studies (specialization in
Management of Arts and Cultures).

by

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Under the supervision of Professor Adriana Martins

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Abstract

This report discusses the impact of commercial and artistic photography on the portrayal of reality. It is based on my six-month experience as an intern at Atelier Mai 98 in Paris, a studio devoted to the production of pictures for the luxury market. In my reflection I intend to demonstrate the close bonds between photography and the advertising industry as far as its conception, distribution and aestheticization are concerned. My aim is to discuss how commercial photography creates codes that modify the perception of reality for commercial reasons whereas artistic photography designs an alternative world by revealing the invisible.

Key words: commercial photography; artistic photography; advertising industry; aestheticization of photography; publicity; luxury; consumerism.

Table of contents

Introduction	10
1. The meaning of photography	16
1.1 The creation of a reproduction tool	16
1.2 Portraying the beauty around us	23
1.3 The reading of picture	28
1.4 The aestheticization of life	36
2. The Industrialization of Pictures	41
2.1 The omnipresence of pictures	41
2.2 The publishing industry	47
2.3 Pictures as objects of consumption	56
3. Alteration of reality	63
3.1 The power of images	63
3.2 The duty of truth	67
3.3 The modification of standards of reality	75
4. Between commercial and artistic photography	80
4.1 Where/When does art begin in photography?	80
4.2 Interview with Thomas Dhellemmes – professional photographer	84
4.3 The experimentation of realities	89
Conclusion	97
Bibliography	102

Index of Images

Image 1: Schema of the camera obscura principle	17
Image 2: View from the window at Le Gras, France, (1826), Joseph Nicéphore Niépce	18
Image 3: Napoleon Crossing the Alps, (1801), Jacques-Louis David	19
Image 4 (<i>top right</i>): Second version, (1801), at Charlottenburg Palace	20
Image 5 (<i>bottom right</i>): Third version, (1802), at Palace of Versailles	20
Image 6 (<i>bottom left</i>): Fourth version, (1803), at Australian Gallery Belvedere	20
Image 7 (<i>top left</i>): Fifth version, at Palace of Versailles	20
Image 8: Sink, (2017), Loan Lamoureux	25
Image 9 (<i>left</i>): Le petit communiste Christophe, (1990), Pierre et Gilles	26
Image 10 (<i>right</i>): Neptune, (1988), Pierre et Gilles	26
Image 11: Sunset, Google image	28
Image 12: Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville, (1950), Henri Cartier Bresson	29
Image 13: Ox cart in Brittany (1857), Paul Marés	30
Image 14: Swingeing London 67, (1968), Richard Hamilton	31
Image 15 (<i>top left</i>): Recovering Alcoholic by Chris Meredith	33
Image 16 (<i>top right</i>): Life Saver by Franky Tsang	33
Image 17 (<i>middle left</i>): Self Made Millionaire by Tristan Stefan Edouard	33
Image 18 (<i>middle right</i>): Psychic by Lyndal Irons	33
Image 19 (<i>bottom left</i>): Ex-Convict by Kate Disher-Quill	33
Image 20 (<i>bottom right</i>): Commercial Fisherman by Jin Lim	33
Image 21: The man falling, (2001), Richard Drew	38
Image 22: Maslow's hierarchy of needs, (1954), Abraham Maslow	42
Image 23: Annual evolution of the advertising net revenue since 2014	48
Image 24: Annual evolution of advertising market in France from 2015 to 2016	49
Image 25 (<i>left</i>): La Prairie, (2016), Jeremy Zenou	51
Image 26 (<i>centre</i>): Guide Lebey, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes	51
Image 27 (<i>right</i>): Boucheron, (2016), Jeremy Zenou	51
Image 28: Ad Campaign Calvin Klein F/W 2017 by Willy Vanderperre	52
Image 29 (<i>left</i>): Guide Lebey, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes	53
Image 30 (<i>centre</i>): Fou de Cuisine, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes	53

Image 31 (<i>right</i>): Duval Leroy, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes.....	53
Image 32: Organizational chart of the advertising image industry	54
Image 33 (<i>left</i>): Darrell Winfield - Marlboro Man, (1979), Marlboro	57
Image 34 (<i>right</i>): Wayne McLaren - Marlboro Man, (1976), Marlboro	57
Image 35: Pâtes – Sauce – Parmesan à l’Italienne de luxe, (1964), Panzini	59
Image 36: Le Gôut de l’authentique, Le Rustique	61
Image 37: Venez comme vous êtes, (2007), McDonald.....	62
Image 38: Untitled, (We Don’t Need Another Hero), (1986), Barbara Kruger.....	66
Image 39: Young people’s critical thinking around images and videos	68
Image 40: Photomontage of Abraham Lincoln and John Calhoun pictures, (1860), Thomas Hicks	70
Image 41 (<i>left</i>): Eric Guerrin – original picture, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes	72
Image 42 (<i>right</i>): Eric Guerrin - after editing, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes	72
Image 43 (<i>left</i>): Maison Auclert – original picture, (2016), Jeremy Zenou	73
Image 44 (<i>right</i>): Maison Auclert – after editing, (2016), Jeremy Zenou	73
Image 45 (<i>left</i>): Original picture, Steve McCurry.....	74
Image 46 (<i>right</i>): Picture after editing, Steve McCurry	74
Image 47: Comparison of the McDonald’s cheeseburger in advertising and the reality	77
Image 48 (<i>left</i>): L, (2012), Lukas Wassmann	82
Image 49 (<i>right</i>): L, (2012), Lukas Wassmann	82
Image 50 (<i>left</i>): GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg, (2017), Lukas Wassmann...	83
Image 51 (<i>right</i>): GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg, (2017), Lukas Wassmann	83
Image 52: Difference between normal vision and deuteranopia	91
Image 53 (<i>left</i>): Steve Reich and Musicians, Drumming, (2011), Martin Klimas	92
Image 54 (<i>right</i>): Untitled, (2004), Martin Klimas.....	92
Image 55 (<i>left</i>): The Enclave, (2014), Richard Mosse.....	93
Image 56 (<i>right</i>): The Enclave, (2014), Richard Mosse	93
Image 57 (<i>left</i>): 1.0: Aberration de réalité, (2017), Adrien David.....	94
Image 58 (<i>right</i>): 1.0: Aberration de réalité, (2017), Adrien David	94
Image 59 (<i>top left</i>): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes	95
Image 60 (<i>top right</i>): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes.....	95
Image 61 (<i>bottom left</i>): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes	95

Image 62 (<i>bottom right</i>): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes.....	95
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List of abbreviations

IREP - Institut des Recherches et Etudes Publicitaires

TV - Television

UK – United Kingdom

STP – Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning

ENSAAMA – Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des Métiers d'Art

Introduction

This internship report was written with a view to obtaining the Master's degree within the framework of the Master in Culture Studies (specialization in Management of the Arts and Culture) of the Faculty of Human Sciences at the Catholic University in Lisbon. It constitutes a reflection resulting from my experience as an intern at Atelier Mai 98, a photographic studio, located in Paris, where I worked as assistant of artistic projects between September 2016 and February 2017. This studio specialized in advertising and luxury photography is directed by Thomas Dhellemmes, founder and photographer of the studio. Atelier Mai 98 organizes and produces artistic projects that essentially use Dhellemmes's work. During the internship, it was necessary to develop new artistic projects, separated from the commercial activity of Atelier Mai 98. The need to understand Dhellemmes's universe and the need to create something unique were a constant challenge.

The creation and production of artistic projects assumed different forms during the internship. First, the photographic work of the last ten years had to be classified. This classification implied the organization of the materials according to the years of production and the selection of photos according to themes and atmospheres (such as nature, water, light, blue, among many). This step was essential to the artistic process and creation of the "series" of photographs. These series were then developed in different formats: a website dedicated to the artist, an exhibition in a gallery or a museum, and a photography book. During these 6 months, we decided to develop the site thomas.dhellemmes.fr which groups Dhellemmes's various projects and makes reference to his books. The former, entitled "Un temps de gourmandise"¹, consists of a photographic journal of 30 images around the theme of gastronomy. It was distributed during the year-end greetings to all customers of Atelier Mai 98. The latter book *Jour Bleu*² is an art photography book, about the blue colour, entirely produced from Polaroids. It is a journey through Dhellemmes's memories.

¹ *A journey of gourmandise* (translation by the student)

² *Blue day* (translation by the student)

The environment built by Thomas Dhellemmes within the studio allowed him to be receptive to ideas and to reuse them. The time spent in the internship was important to reflect on the best artistic potential of the photos, and also on the negative impact that trauma, stress and fear may have on a photographer's creativity.

Besides the challenging effort to articulate professional contracts for the Atelier Mai 98 and to develop artistic projects, my experience as a trainee led me to understand how powerful images are in shaping and modifying our representations of the world. What is at stake is the character of 'truth' we attribute to photography, since as Susan Sontag (1977: 86-87) claims:

A fake painting (one whose attribution is false) falsifies the history of art. A fake photograph (one which has been retouched or tampered with, or whose caption is fake) falsifies reality... Photographs do not simply render reality - realistically. It is reality which is scrutinized, and evaluated, for its fidelity to photographs. "In my view", the foremost ideologue of literary realism, Zola, declared in 1901 after fifteen years of amateur picture-taking, "you cannot claim to have really seen something until you have photographed it." Instead of just recording reality, photographs have become the norm for the way things appear to us, thereby changing the very idea of reality, and of realism.³

Therefore, photography can create a fake world, and this possibility has demanded an increasing level of creativity from photographers on their approach to images bearing in mind the needs of the market and global consumption patterns. This performative dimension of photography raises important ethical issues, since, through the aestheticization of images, photographers are creating visual narratives that may legitimize power structures and serve the interests of certain groups, thus conditioning modes of conduct. Inspired by Mitchell (2005), in this report I will examine the role of photography in the representation of beauty, and will try to provide a response to three key questions that I have raised during my internship: (i) What do pictures want?; (ii) What do photographers want?; and (iii) What do customers want?

The explosion in the number of images we have observed since the end of the 20th century has changed our behaviours and our relationships to writing, objects, and time. We are not yet fully aware of the consequences that this continuous blast of messages, codes, invitations, among others has on our behaviour and on those of younger generations. Yet it is useful to

³ Sontag, Susan (1993 [1977]). *Sur la photographie*, trans. Philippe Blanchard. Paris: Christian Bourgois Editeur. pp.86-87.

recall some basic notions, because the image is a complex sign that needs to be decoded to be fully understood, under penalty of misunderstandings, manipulations or confusions. For the understanding of this report, it is important to define the difference between a picture, a photograph and an image.

Does a photographer make pictures or photographs? What differences can be found between an image and a photograph? Nowadays we use these three words as synonyms, and the confusion thereof derived is largely due to the emergence of digital technology.

With a view to understanding this difference, it is important to study the etymology of words. The word “image” was first used around the late 1400s. It comes from the Latin “imago”. From the imaginary radical, one finds derived terms like imager, imagery. It should be noted that the part of the radical “-im” is the Latin base of “imitari”- which means “imitating”.⁴ Indeed, from the beginning, the word “image” refers to representation and imitation of reality. It is also linked to the various natural tools or those invented by the human being to represent the real. The first image that one has of himself/herself and of the world, for example, is the one which reflects the real on the surface of water. Then, material supports were invented to reflect reality, such as mirrors. An image can be represented in paper, or through another medium. It can be conceptual and have no materialization. It can be a rough draft and the beginning of an idea, having a fleeting and almost non-existent life. In the field of the arts (sculpture, painting, drawing ...), the image designates "the representation of an object". Every day we observe the corner of a wall, a cloud in the sky, a smile that we will not photograph because either we do not have a camera with us or because conditions do not allow us to record the image at its best, or because we are not sure of how we will be able to render the emotion that touched us visible. Nevertheless, images created by our memory remain superior to its photographic version. A photograph thus always starts with an image, and photography allows to fix this image through a physical medium.

⁴ “Image”. *Online etymology dictionary* (2017). Available at http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=image. Last viewed on 30/09/2017.

The word “photography” was created by John Herschel⁵ and comes from two roots of Greek origin: the prefix “photo” – “which proceeds from the light”, “which uses light”; and the suffix “-graphie” meaning “who writes”, “which ends in an image”.⁶ Literally, the word photography means “to paint with light”. The shorter term “photo” is very frequently used. In the case of a photographic image, the terms “image” or “view” are often used, and “print” or “enlargement” are increasingly less utilized since the advent of digital photography. The term was defined as a picture made by a camera, in which an image is focused on the light-sensitive material.

The word “picture” – “pictura” in Latin⁷ refers to the physical representation of an image or a photograph. Signifying “painting” in Latin, this word appeared during the 17th century during the golden age of painting. A picture cannot be digital as it is a tangible object that you can touch. You can hold it and take it. To sum it up, we take *photographs* and the *pictures* you see on a wall are the result of *images* that are printed.

Based on these three definitions we can present the critical reflexion thereof derived as far as the impact of commercial and artistic photography on the portrayal of reality is concerned. The report is composed of four distinct parts which complement each other, mixing theoretical parts and practical components that describe my experience at Atelier Mai 98.

The first part is a reflection on the origins of photography and introduces photography from a theoretical point of view. Starting from the creation of photography during the 19th century, with Louis Daguerre, Henry Fox Talbot and Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, my objective is to understand photography as a tool of representation. The insidious nature of photography, its character of mechanical imprint capable of grasping the reality of things without passing through the hands or the eyes of the artist, make it more powerful than any “traditional” art. Photography is not incompatible with the representation of the reality, but

⁵ In 1819 John Herschel discovered the chemical formula of the photographic images fixer, which helped to improve the process of the cyanotype. In 1839, independently of William Talbot, he invented a photographic process using sensitized paper.

⁶ “Photograph”. *Online etymology dictionary* (2017). Available at http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=photograph. Last viewed on 30/09/2017.

⁷ “Picture”. *Online etymology dictionary* (2017). Available at http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=picture. Last viewed on 30/09/2017.

as a science it needs to be analysed, so that its potential influences can be controlled. Indeed, photography is informed by subjective rules and laws that humans have to set up. Based on the theories of Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, Walter Benjamin or Gisèle Freud, I will reflect on the notions of reproduction, beauty, reading and aestheticization of photographs.

The second part of the report examines the place of pictures in our society. The image has acquired a privileged status, and the means of its diffusion as well as its consumption have never been so numerous nowadays. Many professionals or authors question themselves about the impact and the consequences that the image can have on our ways of consuming. This profusion of images raises a number of questions, particularly about the appropriation and control of the image in our society. By presenting the advertising industry associated with the luxury industry in France, we will study the commercial stakes of the image through the scope of Atelier Mai 98. My aim is to understand how images can become an object themselves. Indeed, sometimes the image surpasses its condition of representation and its promotional role to become a full entity. An image can be independent from its original model and be use out of its context to create a new entity.

The third part of the report is devoted to the democratization of photographic editing through informatics software. This method widely used in the advertising medium shatters the relationship of trust created between the viewer and the photographer. By using concrete examples taken from Atelier Mai 98 database, I will study in which contexts a photograph can be modified. In addition to the commercial aspect of editing, the consequences of such a “trick” are not yet known to the general public. This chapter explains how this change in reality can affect the development of a young audience in its apprehension of the world and its personal self-esteem. At the moment of its creation photography was invested with what Susan Sontag called “the duty of truth” which no longer exists in our modern society.

The fourth part of the report introduces the notion of art in photography and tries to answer to the question: What is photographic art? Without giving a clear answer to this question, I will analyse how photography can go beyond the barrier of the reality to expose and experiment with the non-visible. Thanks to the work of young artists such as Adrian David or David Uzochukwu, I will discuss how photography can create an alternative reality without breaking pre-conceptions of reality. This approach to photography is innovative and

disturbing in order to show the public that it is not because we do not see an object that it does not exist. The possibilities of creation are infinite so much, and photography is a way to reveal them.

The interview with Thomas Dhellemmes, creator and photographer of Atelier Mai 98, is essential to have an external point of view about the concept of art in photography. During this oral exchange Dhellemmes uses his long experience in the photography world to distinguish an artistic from a commercial picture. As the notion of art is very subjective, and very specific to each individual, Dhellemmes's experience has helped me to elaborate and complexify my reflection. This interview was primarily intended to help me understand the different approaches to photography, and the differences between commercial and artistic photography, even if they can be mixed. As artistic director of Atelier Mai 98 and a well-known photographer, Dhellemmes is involved in the creative process and the development of projects. His experience allows him to draw in his knowledge to present a daily innovative work, which is in accordance with the actual photographic trends.

Finally, this report will set out the main conclusions reached after the investigation. It will explain how photography found its place as an art in our society and especially in museums. Moving from a representative role to an artistic one, the image as an object is today recognized for its cultural and creative value. It allows to visually question our reality and the world around us. Nevertheless, photographers, spectators or publishers, each at his/her own level, has a critical duty on the interpretation and use of photography to be able to control its impact.

1. The meaning of photography

1.1 The creation of a reproduction tool

Photography must surely be the most widespread and democratized art form in today's world, and it is more than just an art: it is part of our daily lives. It is accessible, it does not need many technics. According to Infotrends' studies, 3,934,500,000,000 photographs were taken in 2016, and for 2017 the number is expected to reach 14 trillion. It is a constant source of creativity and a tool to capture reality as it happens. However, before we analyse the consequences of photography for society and reality, we need to understand why and how this new technology was created.

Photography as we know it today is the end product of a chain of many discoveries which have been made from the fifth century onwards, and may be said to date from the evolution of the camera obscura principle (from Latin, meaning "dark room": camera "(vaulted) chamber or room," and obscura "darkened, dark").

The concept was explained by Ibn al-Haytham, considered the father of the modern optic, in his book *Books of the Optics*⁸.

Evidence that light and colour do not mingle in air or (other) transparent bodies is (found in) the fact that, when several candles are at various distinct locations in the same area, and when they all face a window that opens into a dark recess, and when there is a white wall or (other white) opaque body in the dark recess facing that window, the (individual) lights of those candles appear individually upon that body or wall according to the number of those candles; and each of those lights (spots of light) appears directly opposite one (particular) candle along a straight line passing through that window. Moreover, if one candle is shielded, only the light opposite that candle is extinguished, but if the shielding object is lifted, the light will return.⁹

The pinhole image occurs when an image of a scene is projected on the other side of an opaque screen. The light passes through a small aperture on the front side of a box and as it was is reversed and inverted (from left to right upside down) and fixed onto a surface on the other side of the hole (image 1).

⁸ *Books of the Optics* is a seven-volume treatise on optics, written by Ibn al-Haytham known as Alhazen in Europe. His work considerably influenced the development of optics in Europe between 1260 and 1650.

⁹ See Smith (2001: 379)

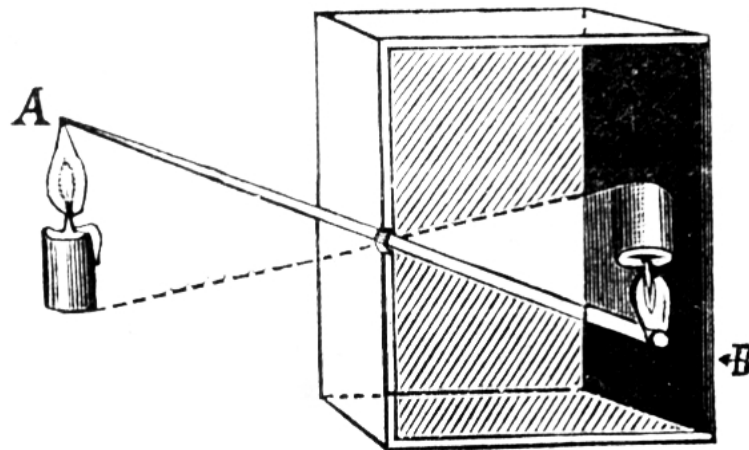


Image 1: Schema of the camera obscura principle ¹⁰

It was only in 1826 that Joseph Nicéphore Niépce created the first permanent ‘photograph’ ever made using a sliding wooden box camera with a sliding panel. The photograph Niépce managed to reproduce represents the view from his window (image 2). It was made using an 8-hour exposure onto pewter coated with bitumen.

He and his colleague Louis-Jacques Mance Daguerre experimented with different chemicals to finally create the *Daguerreotype*, in 1837, recognized as the first photographic camera, which was the first to be manufactured and offered for sale to the public.

As Louis Daguerre claimed to investors in 1838, “The Daguerreotype is not only an instrument to draw nature...(it) has the power to reproduce itself” ¹¹. What Daguerre had to offer was not the ability to reproduce an original image in quantity but an original image that had been available for centuries. What was new was the potential size of that original image.

¹⁰ Fever. *Schema di funzionamento della camera oscura*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lacomunicazione.it/voce/camera-oscura/>. Last viewed on 23/06/2017.

¹¹ English translation by the student of the original quote « le Daguerreotype n’est pas seulement un instrument qui sert à dessiner la nature... (il) lui donne le pouvoir de se reproduire elle-même »- cited in Ferranti (2003: 134).



Image 2: View from the window at Le Gras, France, (1826), Joseph Nicéphore Niépce ¹²

Indeed, the historical transformation of reproduction technologies started with the founding and stamping in the Greek era, through the advancement of xylography at the end of the eighteenth century, which enabled graphic art to reproduce illustrations. Objects made by humans can always be reproduced by humans. The replica was made by pupils and by mastering artistic technics. Manufacturing techniques may have changed, but the product of the earliest form of mass duplication – currency is still with us today. Once invented, it spread rapidly throughout Europe and Asia. The Chinese were the first to use paper, and from them the woodcuts came but the rapid development in reproduction techniques forced the artist to master greater manual skills to create unique artworks.

There was a growing demand for duplicated works of art to be set off to demonstrate the power or affection of the giver. The copies were usually made by apprentices of the original artists, who could take the opportunity to train with different materials and techniques.

¹² Official image of the First Photograph, without any retouching at Gernsheim Collection Harry Center / The University of Texas at Austin.

Niépce (1826). *View from the window at Le Gras*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lacomunicazione.it/voce/camera-oscuro/>. Last viewed on 23/06/2017.

Photography, compared to any other technics, is the first truly revolutionary tool of perfect reproduction.

The main difference is that photography can copy what humans didn't create by themselves. It is not only about reproducing an object, but it is also about capturing real life. The term "to capture" is often used in photography because it catches something the same way a hunter catches an animal. What we see is directly transformed into a virtual or physical object.

Photography in the early days was often compared to painting, with their respective capabilities to reproduce nature. But for the masters of photography from the late 19th century, such as Julia Margaret Cameron, Gertrude Kasebier, and David Octavius Hill, the justification of photography was its breaking away from the painters' goal. Before the appearance of Impressionism and post-impressionism movements during the late nineteenth century, paintings were ruled by Neo-classicism movements such as Romanticism and Realism. The Neo-classicism, starting in 1750, marks an evolution toward a more and more rigorous style regarding representation. The value of a painter's work in the 18th and 19th centuries is judged by his ability to reproduce reality. Anton Raphael Mengs (between 1760 and 1779) and Jacques-Louis David (between 1784 and 1824) were considered to be the major masters of this era. They managed to capture the vitality and the movement in their work by making the main character alive (image 3).



Image 3: Napoleon Crossing the Alps, (1801), Jacques-Louis David ¹³

Regardless of the technique, a painting is always subject to interpretation. By the technique he uses and the material employed, the painter will influence the representation of the reality on the painting. The artist brings his own perception of the scene and guides the artwork to his own will. For example, four copies of Jacques-Louis David's masterpiece were made between 1801 and 1805 (images 4 to 7). Even if they are very similar, when seen side by side they reveal many differences particularly in the colours and the light. Those differences allow another reading of the piece. As Susan Sontag (1977: 16-17) claimed:

What is written about a person or an event is frankly an interpretation, as are handmade visual statements, like paintings and drawings. Photographed images do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it, miniatures of reality that anyone can make or acquire.



¹³ Original version from 1801 present at Palace of Versailles. David (1801). Napoleon Crossing the Alps. [Online image]. Available at <http://site.artsheaven.com/blog/the-story-behind-napoleon-crossing-the-alps/>. Last viewed on 26/06/2017.

Image 4 (*top right*): Second version, (1801), at Charlottenburg Palace ¹⁴
 Image 5 (*bottom right*): Third version, (1802), at Palace of Versailles ¹⁵
 Image 6 (*bottom left*): Fourth version, (1803), at Australian Gallery Belvedere ¹⁶
 Image 7 (*top left*): Fifth version, at Palace of Versailles ¹⁷

In his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin (1935: 21) tries to define the notion of “technological reproducibility” as a key aspect of photography. Besides the technological capabilities to copy, Benjamin argues that photography unravels facts of historical change. It gives a precise representation of a specific thing at a certain moment of time. Despite its actual pictorial representation, this object is existing regarding time and space. Photography was originally used to depict a representation of what things were like from the time they were occurring. It is an important tool in the scientific study of evolutionary and historical changes.

Benjamin (1935: 36) discusses the concept of authenticity in artwork noting that “even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art lacks of one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.” It means that the “sphere of authenticity is outside the technical [sphere]” of producing the art work; and is independent of the copy. The social value of an artwork is judged by the social, political and technological aspects at the date of its creation. It changes as its social context changes. A copy can reproduce the aesthetic of an artwork but not the historical context. According to Benjamin (1935: 74) “the uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being embedded in the fabric of tradition.” Rather than just being a physical object an artwork relates to a certain context that photography cannot reproduce either. As a simple example from popular culture, it is like watching a rebroadcasting football game at home on the TV. The feeling that people could experience in the stadium cannot be transmitted by the image. It is Roland Barthes (1980: 136) who points out that

¹⁴ David (1801). *Charlottenburg version*. [Online image]. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Crossing_the_Alps. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

¹⁵ David (1802). *First Versailles version*. [Online image]. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Crossing_the_Alps. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

¹⁶ David (1803). *Belvedere version*. [Online image]. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Crossing_the_Alps. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

¹⁷ David. *Second Versailles version*. [Online image]. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Crossing_the_Alps. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

Every photograph is a certificate of presence... This certificate is the new embarrassment which its invention has introduced into the family of images. The first photographs a man contemplated (Niepce in front of the *dinner table*, for instance) must have seemed to him to resemble exactly certain paintings (still the *camera obscura*); he knew, however, that he was nose-to-nose with a mutant (a Martian can resemble a man); his consciousness posited the object encountered outside of any analogy, like the ectoplasm of "what-had-been": neither image nor reality, a new being, really: a reality one can no longer touch.

Barthes's premise that photography is a tool to certify what has been done and to show that you were here at the time the photo was taken is reinforced by Susan Sontag's claim (1977: 22), since to her photography is a way to immortalize the mortal.

More than having a historical role, photography is the way for individuals to show what they did.

In our today's society, it is unimaginable to go on holiday without taking a single picture. Photography brings the proof of the reality of the trip, of the accomplishment of the program and the joy obtained. The camera is the best friend of the tourist. Thanks to it, he/she will be able to send pictures to his/her friends and show them where he/she is. More than just a way of using it, it is also a technological update that allows us to send a picture through our smartphone. This improvement includes communication and not only representation.

All of us have already experienced the holiday picture session in the living room, with friends who just came back from a trip. People become very enthusiastic to detail all the pictures and all the places where they have been. Even if it can be funny and interesting, the lack of context makes it impossible for us to appreciate what we see.

To take a picture is, in a way, a narrow approach to remembering what we are afraid to forget. Pictures play the role of the memory as they are the proof of what we did. Everything is recorded and captured to make sure it will stay in our collection of our own life. With the democratization of traveling, tourists accumulate photographic trophies of the Eiffel Tower, the Corcovado or Venice as a kind of checklist of things that must be done.

But to take a picture is also a way to refuse the reality by converting images into souvenirs. The camera brings an indirect distance between the subject and the photographer. It is a way not to get yourself involved in the reality around. Most tourists think they have to interpose the camera between them and what they meet, without knowing how to act. People stop, take a picture and leave as quickly as they came.

The selfie practice, democratized by social media, has amplified the egocentrism raised by photography. By taking a self-portrait in front of the place where you are, people are giving

the ultimate proof of where they are and that what they see is not a picture taken on the Internet. The experience is overshadowed by the physical presence itself.

1.2 Portraying the beauty around us

Tastes in terms of photography vary a lot. They evolve with trends and cultures but since the creation of the first photographic camera, one thing has never changed: the search for beauty. During the 19th century, women photographers such as Julia Margaret Cameron celebrated the ideal beauty or emotional ties between women to glorify the maternal feelings and the social role of mothers through photos. This aspect is not sufficiently captured by the male sex. At this time, “the roles” were reversed. It is unusual to see the woman behind the camera and the man only as a spectator. Taking a picture is stealing a part of the life of the subject. The photographed doesn’t have any control on the image. It is a feeling of submission relatively to the photographer that one has to experience. In this exposition, the woman has the power to deliver her vision of manhood that is client, friend, and husband (clothed or naked). The private is not exclusively a female domain. The praise of fatherhood, evoking the intimate whether romantic or friendly allows to show and break the image of masculinity (Moullin, 2016: 9).

The notion of beauty is very subjective as it cannot be described, but photography can guide us to find it. Pictures have never shown ugliness to people. It is because we think something is beautiful that we take a picture (Sontag Susan, 1977: 109). In 1841, Fox Talbot, the inventor of permanent photography, patented his creation as “calo-type” name. “Kalos” which means “beautiful” in Latin.

Indeed, the act of taking a picture is guided by our eyes and by the object that catches our attention. It is a natural instinct that tells us to take a picture of a landscape, children or food. Thinking doesn’t interfere with the process, and can sometimes block the creation: “To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place [...] I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them. »¹⁸

¹⁸ DukeLibDigitalColl, “Visions and Images, Elliott Erwitt”, Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 8 December 2008. Web. 27/06/2017.

As Susan Sontag (1977) points out, photography helps us to pay attention to things around us. It renders visible on what became invisible. It changes the perception of our environment and in a way offers a copy of the world we are looking for. It took inspiration in the beauty of kitsch, of incongruous objects. Photography plays with accidents to reach a superior form of reality. Photography gives a different perspective of our world, and breaks the standard of reality. The idea was highly supported by André Breton, considered as the founding father of Surrealism. In *Le Manifeste du Surréalisme* (1924: 26), he claimed:

SURREALISM, n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express — verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner — the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern.

ENCYCLOPEDIA: Philosophy. Surrealism is based on the belief in the superiority of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of dreams, in the disinterested play of thought.

According to Breton (1924: 328), Surrealism relies on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms, the omnipotence of the dream, and the disinterested play of thought. It tends to permanently ruin all other psychic mechanisms and to replace them in solving the main problems of life.

The beauty is instinctive and cannot be controlled. It will be convulsive or won't exist. Marcel Duchamp with his work *Fountain*¹⁹ illustrates very well this thought.

The premise of the anti-art or anti-rational cultural movement is considered as the most controversial artwork in the 20th century. *Fountain* was rejected by the committee of the Society of Independent Artists in which Duchamp was a board member even though the rules stated that all works would be accepted from artists who had paid the fee.

This decision raised the debate on what art was and was not. Duchamp explained that his intent with the piece was to shift the focus of art from physical craft to intellectual interpretation. Art is nothing but pure creativity. Duchamp and the Surrealism movement wanted to propose other perspectives of life and of what surrounded us. Their philosophy was to break the standards we give to objects by making us discover another reality. Our society is restricted by the unconscious use of the environment.

¹⁹ *Fountain* by Marcel Duchamp is an artwork submitted in 1917 to the exhibition of the Society of Independents Artists. Duchamp reoriented a standard Bedfordshire urinal to a position 90 degrees from its normal position of use and named it "Fountain". Today there is only one replica of the original piece made between 1950 and 1960.

Nowadays, we see artists finding beauty in unexpected places. Indeed, photography is the art of observing. It teaches our eyes to appreciate simple aesthetic forms. In his recent work *Sink* (2017), Loan Lamoureux²⁰ explored the artistic potential of dinner's leftovers stuck into a sink hole (image 8). Beyond the dirty aspect of the work, the association of colours and textures of the different food remains creates a poetic picture like an abstract painting.

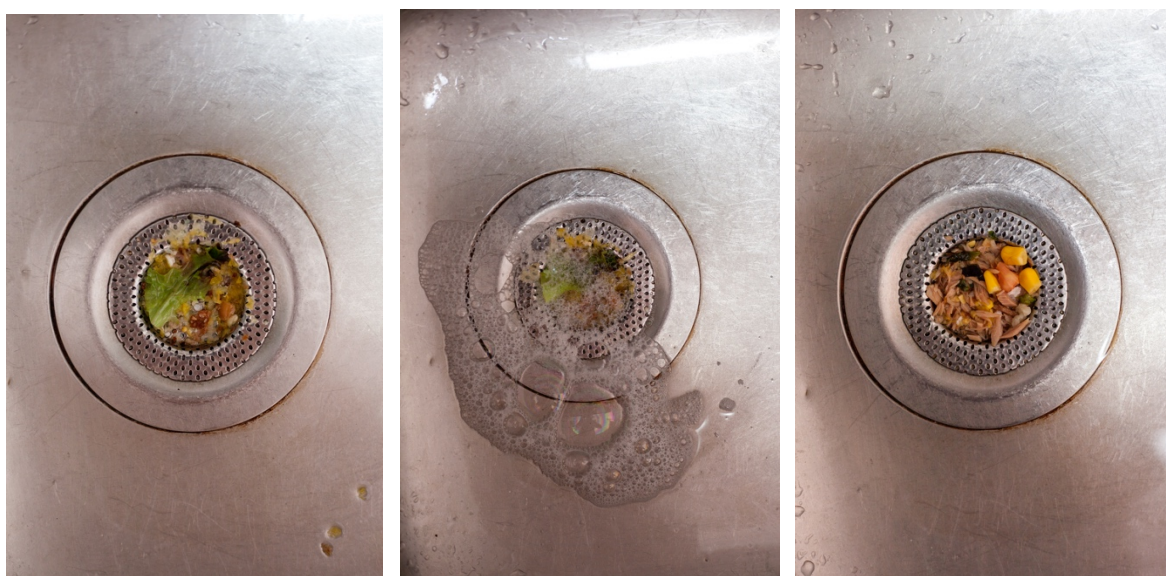


Image 8: Sink, (2017), Loan Lamoureux²¹

The term aestheticization is not obviously related to good taste. In photographic work, we often talk about “sensibility”. This notion has never been named or explained because it refers to your personal perception of things. Sensibility is unique to each individual. The sensibility of exaggerated beauty led to the creation of Kitsch²² and the notion of “camp”. Indeed, the essence of camp is the love of the unnatural, of artifice and exaggeration. It breaks the conventional value, beauty, and taste of something to create ironic photography. It is ruled by specific codes understood by people with the same sensibility.

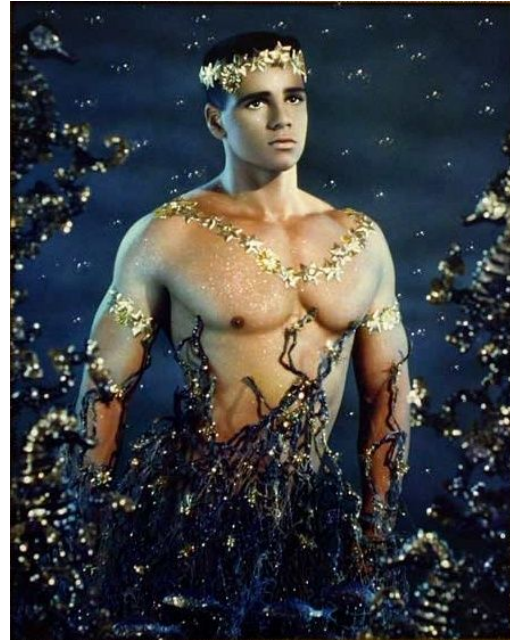
²⁰ Loan Lamoureux (23 years old) is a young French photographer living between Paris and Lisbon.

²¹ Images from the private collection of Loan Lamoureux

²² Kitsch is “art, objects, or design considered to be in poor taste because of excessive garishness or sentimentality, but sometimes appreciated in an ironic or knowing way”. The definition is available at <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/kitsch>. Last viewed on 12/07/2017.

Indeed, the ultimate camp statement is “it’s good because it’s awful”. The art of kitsch puts things out of their concept and associates different elements to disrupt people in their conception of art. It takes its inspiration in decorative art, religion, ideology (image 9), nature, and fashion and dissociates them from their origin. The accumulation of aesthetic elements creates the extraordinary through non-sense. It is considered as the art of “bad taste” and ironic value.²³

Pierre and Gilles are the leaders of this movement in French photography. Their works stage characters in a sophisticated life-size environment by combining painting and photography. The duo abolishes some of the boundaries between high art and low art by forgetting about realism and artistic convention. They embellish the story of the model with grace, sensuality, and esotericism. Their photographs depict icons that are mysterious, glorified, eroded, deified to the extent that they incorporate popular imagery. Constantly rearranging the art of portraiture, the two men explore the limits of contemporary aesthetics. The references are highly related to homosexual communities. The two men became a banner of gender art particularly with major works such as *Le Cowboy* (1978) (image 9), and *Neptune* (1988) (image 10), which bear a message of openness and tolerance.



²³ Note by Susan Sontag about Camp published in 1964, available at Faculty Georgetown. “Note on « Camp » by Susan Sontag”. Available at <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Sontag-NotesOnCamp-1964.html>. Last viewed on 12/08/2017.

Image 9 (*left*): *Le petit communiste Christophe*, (1990), Pierre et Gilles ²⁴

Image 10 (*right*): *Neptune*, (1988), Pierre et Gilles ²⁵

But the copy given by photography is now even more successful than the reality in itself. The camera has so well succeeded in embellishing the world that pictures are now giving the criteria of beauty (Sontag, 1977: 110).

Indeed, by looking at pictures everyday people associate the pictorial representation to how it should be. Pictures are creating standards of beauty and by photographing this beauty, days after days, run it out.

Because of photography beauty is limited in time and space. Beauty is no longer a universal and timeless notion. By looking at the same picture people are getting fastly bored of it. Instead of highlighting the beauty, photography is making it disappear. In a nutshell, by overtaking things in pictures, photography is indirectly doing the opposite of its original goal.

When you search “sunset” in Google images, you will find the “best” sunset pictures (image 11). If we look at the result, we can see that all the pictures represent an orange sunset with a sky on fire. However, a sunset by its nature is unique. It depends on the place you are, the time of the day and the climatic conditions. Unfortunately, we are conditioned by the representation of the sunset as we can see it on the Internet or on the TV. This image of is influenced by the standard of beauty given by photography. As a consequence, people will be disappointed to see a sunset and it won’t look like the one they imagine in their head. Sunset, like the sea, the snow, etc. belongs to the “common”. The more you see it, the less it interests you, and step by step it will disappear in front of your eyes.

²⁴ Pierre et Gilles (1990). *Le petit communiste Christophe*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/123004633546126139/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

²⁵ Pierre et Gilles (1988). *Neptune*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/489977634437144107/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

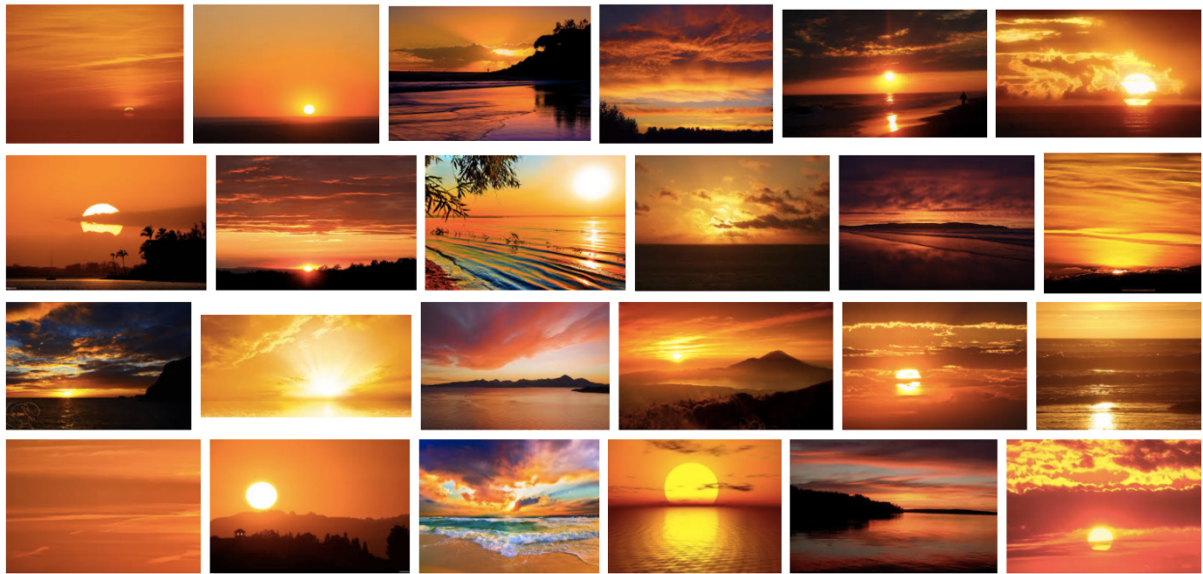


Image 11: Sunset, Google image ²⁶

1.3 The reading of pictures

A picture is like an open book. It tells a story in a certain space, time, with its characters and sometimes its dialogues. We can read a picture as we are reading a novel but a picture doesn't give you all the clues to know the end of the story. As a picture is limited by its frame, the photographer can choose what he/she wants to show and or what he/she does not want. It is an unfinished story that requires your imagination to complete it. Our imagination, if compared to a picture, is limitless and what makes a picture interesting or not is the fact that our brain wants to finish the story (or not). We have to see a picture like a puzzle with missing pieces. In his picture *Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville* (image 12), Henri Cartier Bresson shows us a couple kissing in front of a café next to the Hotel de Ville in Paris. What do we know about this picture? We know the time: 1950; the place: the city hall of Paris; the main characters: a woman and a man; the context: after the Second World War, but what is the story behind it? Five years after the end of WWII, France is enjoying peace; no more people will die because of extremist ideologies. In this context of joy and happiness, this couple fell in love and they probably got married. The man could have been a member of the French Resistance or an American soldier who stayed in Paris after the liberation. This story is mine but I am sure someone can imagine something different.

²⁶ Screenshot of google image after searching "Sunset" in the research bar 11/06/2017.



Image 12: Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville, (1950), Henri Cartier Bresson²⁷

Roland Barthes in *Camera Lucida* (1980: 47) tried to identify the phenomenon that attracts us in pictures. Indeed, why do we prefer a picture rather than another? The notion of bad and good is very subjective but what makes a picture interesting? Barthes managed to isolate two parameters: the *Studium* and the *Punctum*.

The *Studium* is the element that initially gets your attention. It can be colours, a cool background, a pose, really anything²⁸. The *Studium* belongs to the random interest, the inexplicable desire to read a picture. It is about the unconscious taste that comes from your education. There is a difference between to like/dislike and to love. To like is to show interest in what you see first based on your basic education (knowledge, experience). We have more pleasure watching a picture when it implies our *Studium* because it relates to something we know and we can have an opinion about.

The second point is the *Punctum*, the thing that “pricks or bruises”. It’s that rare detail that makes the viewer feel something and pushes the photo even further.²⁹

²⁷ Cartier Bresson (1950). *Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville*. [Online image]. Available at <https://iconicphotos.org/2009/05/08/le-baiser-de-lhotel-de-ville/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

²⁸ Definition by Aaron Nace available at PHLEARN, “The Basics of Studium and Punctum in Photo - A Phlearn Video Tutorial », Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 26 February 2013. Web. 27/06/2017.

²⁹ Definition by Aaron Nace available at PHLEARN, “The Basics of Studium and Punctum in Photo - A Phlearn Video Tutorial », Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 26 February 2013. Web. 27/06/2017.

This detail is not always obvious and can be understood differently by people. If you take a random look at a picture, it is where your eyes stop. The *Punctum* raises your curiosity and drives you to make more investigation. The *Punctum* when compared to the *Studium* is more personal. It is as well much more powerful because it determines if you “like” a picture or if you “love” it. As a practical part, it is very important for a photographer to identify the *Punctum* in a scene or an image to produce stronger and impacting work. To understand this concept, I have chosen two examples.

The image 13 by Paul Marés shows an ox cart in Brittany. The scene is from another age. The cart is made of big wooden wheels. The house on the background looks abandoned and the door is still open (this is the historical interest, the *Studium*). But next to the door, catching our eyes, we can see three Christian crosses, painted on the wall. This is the *Punctum*. Even if we can suppose that people were more religious during the 19th century, these crosses look like marks of vandalism. Like the graffiti, these crosses accentuate the dilapidated and ruined character of this house. What happened to this village? Are people alive? This element attracts my curiosity.



Image 13: Ox cart in Brittany (1857), Paul Marés ³⁰

³⁰ Marés (1857). *Ox cart in Brittany*. [Online image]. Available at <https://artblart.com/tag/jean-baptiste-frenet-thought-to-be-a-mother-and-son/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

The other example is Richard Hamilton's picture, *Swingeing London 67* (image 14). This picture represents Mick Jagger handcuffed to the art dealer Robert Fraser. The photograph was taken after their trial for drugs possession. Both were convicted (this is the *Studium*). On this picture, the handcuffs picked my attention. Why are they handcuffed together? I imagine that there are many journalists covering this event for the press. Both are celebrities internationally known and this affair has an important impact on the artistic community. Meanwhile, the fact that they are both trying to cover their face reminds me of a public humiliation. It is like in 1944 when French women accused of collaboration with Nazis had their heads shaved and were paraded through the streets barefoot.



Image 14: *Swingeing London 67*, (1968), Richard Hamilton ³¹

But Barthes's theory is not sufficient to read a picture. A picture is the representation of the reality in a specific moment. The representation of what we see is very personal. Photography is more than just taking a picture. More than a simple object, it is linked to

³¹ Image from the Tate Modern collection. Hamilton (1968). *Swingeing London 67*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hamilton-swingeing-london-67-f-t01144>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

emotions, feelings, and also your background. The photographer, by the composition he/she chooses for his/her picture, decides to show something or not according to the message he/she wants to deliver. This composition is based on many factors, but the final result always depends on the photographer's perception. Making choices is part of the work and a picture can have a totally different meaning based on the angle and the aesthetic style you want to show. Why do we like a picture or not? What makes a picture interesting or not? These questions are essential to understanding what photography is. Canon Australia did a video in 2015 to prove that "A photograph is shaped more by the person behind the camera than by what's in front of it".³² During this video, it has been asked to six photographers to take a portrait of a man. Each photographer individually spent time with the actor to know a bit more about him and to have more information. But to understand the impact of the photographer on a photography, the actor was creating a different story with every photographer. He claimed to be a fisherman, an ex-inmate, an ex-alcoholic, a self-made millionaire, a life-saver and psychic. Based on his story each photographer took a portrait and tried to use an angle or a position that could reflect his personality and the result was very impressive. We can see below (images 15 to 20) how six different people look like. The picture (image 17) with the straight face shows the millionaire; it evokes power and success. On the other hand, the picture of the man sitting alone (image 15) in front of the camera shows an ex-alcoholic. It points out the difficulty and the lonely journey he went through.

³² Canon Australia, "THE LAB: DECOY - A portrait session with a twist", Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 3 November 2015. Web. 27/06/2017.



Image 15 (top left): *Recovering Alcoholic* by Chris Meredith³³

Image 16 (top right): *Life Saver* by Franky Tsang³⁴

Image 17 (middle left): *Self Made Millionaire* by Tristan Stefan Edouard³⁵

Image 18 (middle right): *Psychic* by Lyndal Irons³⁶

Image 19 (bottom left): *Ex-Convict* by Kate Disher-Quill³⁷

Image 20 (bottom right): *Commercial Fisherman* by Jin Lim³⁸

³³ Meredith (2015). *Recovering Alcoholic*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

³⁴ Tsang (2015). *Life Saver*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

³⁵ Stefan Edouard (2015). *Self Made Millionaire*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

³⁶ Irons (2015). *Psychic*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

³⁷ Disher-Quill (2015). *Ex-Convict*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

³⁸ Lim (2015). *Commercial Fisherman*. [Online image]. Available at <http://twistedstifter.com/2015/11/a-portrait-session-with-a-twist/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

This example shows the difficulties to understand a picture and how pictures can be used to illustrate something. According to the standard of perception, we unconsciously associate postures to personal traits. This comment does not only apply to photography. Our daily perception of life is based on stereotypes that are very difficult to ignore. Pictures are not neutral, and in that sense, they cannot entirely represent the reality from an objective point of view.

Even if photography is based on reality and on what we see, it can be manipulated in order to spread a specific message. It is essential to keep in mind that the interpretation of photography is always related to a specific context. Putting a picture out of its context gives it a completely different meaning (cf. Freud, 1974). With the common use of photography in newspapers to illustrate articles, photojournalism has often been the source of falsification or manipulation. Indeed, a lot of independent photographers are not attached to a specific press agency. They are selling their work to the highest bidder.

Photograph as text or what Hughes and Noble (2003) call “phototextualities” is not only a strong argument for the narrative power of photography but a call for a context-sensitive and interdisciplinary engagement with the photographic medium. Some photographers such as Robert Capa, Robert Doisneau, Henri Cartier-Bresson or Stuart Franklin have democratized the discipline after the Second World War, since the world press felt the need to glorify the human being and to prevent other fascist acts from happening. Different agencies such as Magnum photos, 1947, National Press Photographers Association, 1946 or VII photo Agency, 2001 were created. These agencies ensured the independence of photographers, an essential condition to prevent any external influences. Photographers were able to show what they wanted without any control. They testified of humanity scared by inequality and social misery. Henri Cartier Bresson, one of the creators of Magnum Agency declared in 1962:

I wish to remind everyone that Magnum was created to allow us, and in fact to oblige us, to bring testimony on our world and contemporaries according to our own abilities and interpretations (...). I won't enter into a great deal of detail about who, when, why and where, but I feel a hard touch of sclerosis descending upon us. When events of significance are taking place, when it doesn't involve a great deal of money and when one is nearby, one must stay photographically in contact with the realities taking place in front of our lenses and not hesitate to sacrifice material comfort and security. This return to our sources would keep our heads and lenses above the artificial life which so often surrounds us.³⁹

³⁹ “Magnum Photos: 101 photos pour la liberté de la presse” (April, 2010). *REPORTERS SANS FRONTIERES* N°33.

The narrative potential of photography not only depends on the respective genre, but it differs from one image to another. Narrative stories will also likely have within them the following moments such as conflicts, exposition, climax, resolution. That is why photojournalism focuses on the human behind and social conflicts (cf. Werner, 2003)

A narrative is an account of connected events. Thinking about narrative, however, involves more than reflecting on how a series of events becomes connected. We also need to think about how something is constituted as an event in the first place. Events are not found objects waiting to be discovered. As Allen Feldman (1991: 14) has stated that “the event is not what happens. The event is that which can be narrated”.

An event is created by its history and its context. For example, during the French Revolution and the Storming of the Bastille on 14th of July, 1789, people did not realize that they were taking part in the first day of an event already known as “the French Revolution”. It is the product of a political and historical narrative at a particular moment.

In photography the narration is related to the idea of context. No matter how complete or comprehensive a narrative appears, it will always be the result of including some elements and excluding others. Inclusion/exclusion is part of what construction is all about, but knowing what should be included or excluded requires an understanding of the context. And an understanding of context requires visual storytellers to be highly proficient researchers. There are common elements to traditional narrative structures in photography. For example, time, causality, spatiality and personification. A photograph is framed by its physical dimensions. If compared to movies, a photograph only shows one scene and lets the viewer imagine what is happening outside the box.

Photojournalism is often characterized by its absolute authenticity. There is no place for artistic interpretation of the reality. The notion of “beautiful” doesn’t interfere in photojournalism and it is impossible to say that one photo is better than the other one. The American photographer Steve McCurry was criticized by the world press community for his work that was not considered as photojournalism. People argued that it was more about documenting and sublimating the human than showing real life.⁴⁰ According to his view, an image bears testimony of what has been or is. But the camera cannot “see”. It only

⁴⁰ Steve McCurry. “Gallery”. Available at <http://stevemccurry.com/galleries>. Last viewed on 27/08/2017.

reproduces something. We all construct what we perceive to be the reality in a very subjective way.

1.4 The aestheticization of life

The phenomenon of aestheticization is one of the consequences of showing beauty through photography. This concept is not only applied to this medium, but it is connected to the development of new technologies and the transformation of the industrial society into the post-industrial society. As a simple definition, aestheticization is the action or process of making something aesthetic in character or appearance. During the 18th century, aestheticism (also called Aesthetic Movement)⁴¹ was an intellectual and art movement that gave emphasis to aesthetic values instead of social-political themes in literature, fine art, music and other arts. In other words, art in this particular movement focuses more on being beautiful rather than having a deeper meaning. The concept was then used by Walter Benjamin in his book *The Aesthetics of Politics: Walter Benjamin's "Theories of German Fascism"* (1979) to explain how fascist ideologies, and essentially Nazism, have spread an artistic conception of life to the embellishment of the reality. The interpretation of life corresponds to philosophical inquiries of post-modernism where the characteristic of the subject is questioned. It is the rejection of particular conceptions by redefining the objective reality and the absolute truth. Developed in the mid- to late 20th century across philosophy, it involves the arts, architecture, and criticism which marked a departure from modernism. It comes after the questioning about if everything can be art and if there is no reason to conform to reality. Walter Benjamin (2016 [1972]: 57) also said that:

A photography which is able to relate a tin of canned food to the universe, yet cannot grasp a single one of the human connections in which even in its most dreamlike compositions is more concerned with eventual saleability than with understanding the true facts of this photographic creativity is the advertisement.

⁴¹ The Art Story. "The aesthetic movement". Available at <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-aesthetic-art.htm>. Last viewed on 24/07/2017.

Art doesn't need to have real value or meaning to be meaningful. The most famous example being the artist Andy Warhol. Warhol "cheap" producible style doesn't have true value or meaning. It is simple, catchy and only based on the assumption of aestheticism. It is influenced by Roland Barthes's essay, "The Death of Author" (1967: 142-148) in which he stated: "to give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing."

But this statement raises a debate about social photography and photojournalism. How can photography engage in the representations of misery? What is the image of these people or populations? And, above all, can we make misery aesthetic? Here we need to take stock of the notion of "aesthetics". When we speak of "beautiful photographs", we can say that they are pleasant, seductive, harmonious, since each one of these criteria is not exclusive. The idea of harmony refers to the standards of the composition of a photograph, of the balance of tones and colours. The journalistic norm of balance would be to favour a certain simplicity and to facilitate the readability of the image in order to recognize a place, a situation, a person. Harmony is therefore not morally suspect since it initially promotes the reading of information and accelerates the dissemination of this information. When the photojournalist begins to promote disharmony in his photography, he enters into the realm of what we have called the play of art, privileging a style effect rather than the information itself, photography loses sight of its social impact; when the message is scrambled by its support.

Susan Sontag, in her essay *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), written in post-September 11, attempts to summarize the use of photography to present the suffering of misery and war. The book questions the impact of photography and the evolution of collective sensitivity to the visions of the horrors of the 20th century. How has photography changed the perception of dramatic events in the course of its history? Can it provoke the total and uncompromising rejection of war and its violence?

The 11th of September 2001 is a date everybody will remember in his/her life. On this day, 3,000 people died during a terrorist attack after the crash of two airplanes on the World Trade Centre, one of the symbols of New York City and of the capitalist power of the United States. It is the first and the biggest attack ever made on the American territory. The picture of Richard Drew (image 21) remains the most iconic picture of this tragedy. It shows a man

falling from the tower, probably after having jumped to save his life. Sixteen years later, this picture still represents a mystery because no one was able to identify this man⁴².

Beyond its historical value, and the fact that this photo is the only one that represents a person dying that day, this picture has everything to be artistic. The verticality of the composition with the windows of the buildings and the man who falls head down, make the picture very aesthetic. There is in this photo a feeling of lightness despite the gravity of the event as if the man was hovering in the air. The contrast between the sunny part and the shaded part of the buildings accentuates the symmetry of the photo.



Image 21: The man falling, (2001), Richard Drew⁴³

This gap between what we see and what is actually happening reminds us that photography is only a support, a proof of what happened. The difficulty is to make the viewer react to break the barrier of the object. The biggest handicap of photography is its apparent inability to emerge from the spectacular, from this aesthetics of shock, which is above all an attractive and commercial aesthetics.

⁴² Millar (2016). "Who was the FALLING MAN of 9/11? Mystery surrounds the victim of Twin Towers terror attack." Available at: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/709440/who-was-falling-man-9-11-september-11-attack-twin-tower-15-year-anniversary>. Last viewed on 28/08/2017.

⁴³ Drew (2001). *The man falling*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.parismatch.com/Actu/International/15-ans-apres-le-11-Septembre-qui-est-l-homme-qui-tombe-1065655>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

The multitude of pictures showing war or poverty anesthetizes the perception of the reader, immunizing him/her against the misery of the world. This feeling of shock follows a sense of contemplation and impotence. Only the beauty of the image remains engraved in the memory. As Walter Benjamin explained about the subsequent development of photography during a speech at the Institute for the Study of Fascism in Paris in 1934,

What do we see? It has become more and more subtle, more and more modern and the result is that is now incapable of photographing a tenement or a rubbish heap without transfiguring it. Not to mention a river dam or an electric cable factory: in front of these, photography can now only say 'How beautiful' [...] It has succeeded in turning abject poverty itself, by handling it in a modish, technically perfect way, into an object of enjoyment.⁴⁴

In her essay Susan Sontag (2003: 86) analysed the exhibition *Migrations: Humanity in Transition*⁴⁵ by Sebastião Salgado which displays beautiful photographs of migrants from all over the world. The main problems posed by this series are related to the beauty of these shots, as Susan Sontag says, “filmic”, but also to the indefinite grouping of these sufferings. Refugees, travellers, and immigrants of all sorts come together randomly, without concern for precision or identification, without the visitor knowing anything about their journey: the captions merely mention the place and the year of the taking, without ever naming the subjects, nor specifying the circumstances of these displacements of population. This suffering then slips towards abstraction, to such an extent that the public cannot at any moment imagine a possible action to alter this distress.

Commenting on an exhibition by Edward Steichen in 1955, *The Family of Man*, to which Sontag also alluded (2003: 86), Roland Barthes (2014: 190-193) already noted in *Mythologies*, how this tendency to universalism could be manipulative. The crowd of anonymous sufferers erases, in a way, the important point by giving a sum of individual sufferings:

⁴⁴ Walter Benjamin lecture at the Institute for the Study of Fascism in Paris, 27th April 1934. Benjamin Walter (1969). *Reflection*, trans. Edmund Jephcott. New York: Schocken Books. p.118.

⁴⁵ *Migrations: Humanity in Transition* is a series of compelling images presented at the international centre of photography of NYC in 2001. Sebastião Salgado demonstrates the ways people involved in mass migrations enrich us through their sense of hope and the diverse realities of their lives. “Sebastião Salgado: 100 photos pour la liberté de la presse” (Spring, 2015). *REPORTERS SANS FRONTIERES* N°51.

This myth of the human 'condition' rests on a very old mystification, which always consists of placing Nature at the bottom of History. [...]. Progressive humanism, on the contrary, must always remember to reverse the terms of this very old imposture, constantly to scour nature, its 'laws' and its limits' in order to discover History there, and at last to establish Nature itself as historical.

Birth, death, work, and therefore migration, are human data that have indeed existed for centuries, but that need to be understood. The pictures that manage to signify horror are those that opt for the emotional time: photos stripped of the direct primary shock of "the ornament of the spectacular". Barthes (1957: 115) speaks of the *numen* of the photograph, which would correspond to the absorbing moment of a painting. Indeed, most of the shocking pictures are fake because they are in a middle state between narrative and effusion: too perfect to be a painting and too intended to be photography. (Barthes Roland, 1957, p. 115)

In opposition to Susan Sontag's statement, *Fontainhas trilogy* carried out by Pedro Costa shows us a different approach to social photography. Rather than extracting the residents from their neighbourhood, to get them out of their existence, the filmmaker took care to follow them in their daily life and to highlight the simple richness of their life. The inhabitant of Fontainhas stays in Lisbon, and the spectator will probably never visit his/her, but the viewer can also appreciate the simplicity of embellishment in a non-intrusive way. This work aims to show how people strive to create beauty in the misery of their daily lives.

Jacques Rancière (2008) assumes that artistic practices could allow us to better understand the other; what he lives and what brings us closer, by assigning to his ways of being that we did not suspect. Aestheticization is therefore not incompatible with the representation of misery, but perhaps a guarantee of the understanding of the subject. The inability of photography to prevent war is one of the greatest disappointments of this century compared with the expectations it originally provoked. It can be a difficult task for a contemporary photographer to let space to think when the subject is already intense enough to speak of himself.

The work of the photographer is to force the viewer to see beyond the real and photography in itself. As it was previously said, a picture always depends on a context. It helps the spectator to understand the message of the picture. The aestheticization is detrimental to the information. As photography is only a fragment of life, its moral value depends on its process of use. (cf. Cheney; Steve; Munshi, 2010)

Many writers and photographers, including James Agee and Walter Evan, have committed themselves to defend the integration of truth. Their work *Let US Now Praise Famous Men* provided an objective view of the lives of impoverished farmers during the Great Depression. The association of texts with pictures is essential not to alternate the reality of facts without restricting the process of creation.

2. The Industrialization of Pictures

2.1 The omnipresence of pictures

During the 20th century, and especially after the 1950s, people saw their living conditions improve. It was during this period that hyper-consumption was born. In developed countries, families have seen their wages increase, which has resulted in a decline of the expenses dedicated to food.

At the end of the war, Europe had no resources and had to rebuild. It was reconstructed according to the Marshall Plan, based on the American model, the "American way." The need to restore everything led to innovation especially in equipments for the house. The 1960s witnesses the creation of washing machines, refrigerators or utensils of cooking. People began to pay attention to the car, to the neighbour's house. People started buying with a view to "being". It was from that point onwards that people began to consume excessively. (cf. Baudrillard, 1970)

Maslow's work (1954) helps to classify people's needs by importance through 5 levels. This ranking corresponds to the order in which they appear to the individual; meeting the needs of a level that generates the needs of the next level (image 22)

Unsurprisingly, for example, physiological needs are being sought before security needs: this is why, in a situation where our survival is at stake, we are ready to take risks.⁴⁶ This theory became a reference in the study of Marketing as it helps to evaluate the level of need your product may reach. Each level of needs requires a different approach to satisfy the customer. Going back to the period after the Second World War, the development of

⁴⁶ See McLoad (2007). "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs". Available at <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>. Last viewed on 02/09/2017.

technology and products have increased all the needs at the same time. Trying to improve the daily life of households, the way of consuming moved from a basic need to a psychological need. The act of consuming is now intimately related to the esteem needs. People feel accomplished to have the last trendy object before the others. It is a race to have the most in a material world. The value of what you have defines you as a person more than who you are.

Nevertheless, the main criticism of Maslow's model is based on the dubious assumption that the individual would pass from one level to another only once the needs of the lower level were satisfied; or any human being does not necessarily have this way of prioritizing his needs, both in his personal and professional life. At some point, these needs may be simultaneous or even contradictory.

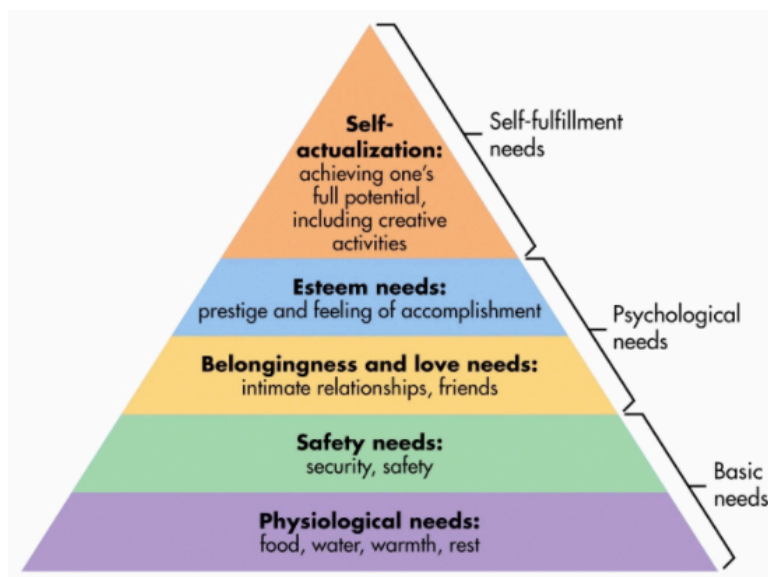


Image 22: Maslow's hierarchy of needs, (1954), Abraham Maslow ⁴⁷

The mass consumption has forced the companies to produce and to communicate more. The goal is to sell and to create the need in the consumer's head. Slogans are associated with images to create a virtual image of the product. We all have in mind catchy slogans famous

⁴⁷ Maslow (1954). *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

that will never disappear. Coca-Cola slogans, for example, are concentrated on the experience and the taste with “Taste The Feeling” (cf. Holt, 2004). Recently Coca-Cola accentuated its campaign on the sharing and friendliness of drinking a Coca-Cola showing people smiling and sharing a drink: “Where There's Coke There's Hospitality”.

The consumer society has created a mercantile takeover of the image in the public space. We live in a society of communication, therefore, of the image. We are continually bombarded by billboards, screens, magazines that catch our attention. The image has taken a central place in everyday life; it has become a consumer good. In addition to our position of image receivers, everyone is likely to produce and distribute it especially since the development of digital images and the Internet. The multiplication of images, their omnipresence more particularly through screens, will not slow down. (cf. Benedek, Veszelszki, 2016)

Pictures are omnipresent in our society in advertising, pictures, video, TV, cinema, etc. They are created by marketing to make brands so important that people will feel that they belong to a group, to a community. In marketing, we talk about brand image. It is “the impression in the consumers’” mind of a brand’s total personality (real and imaginary qualities). The brand image is developed over time through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme and is authenticated through the consumer’s direct experience”.⁴⁸

This image is essentially a “mental” projection of a subjective vision a company wants to give. The diffusion of the message constructed and addressed to a targeted audience is likely to generate an exchange, a reasoning and, thus, to influence the public. It helps to increase the consumer awareness, and to convert it into familiarity. Its final goal is to influence consumers’ buying behaviour. “See more, buy more” is the principle of consumerism. This social and economic movement gives users an active role at the economic and social level. It is the ideology that encourages the continued acquisition of objects up to beyond the stage of real utility. James and Szeman (2010) drew the attention to the relation between the ideology of market globalism and the global imaginary:

⁴⁸ “Brand Image”. *Business Dictionary*. Available at <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/brand-image.html>. Last viewed on 08/09/2017.

In the almost complete absence of other sustained macro-political and social narratives – concern about global climate change notwithstanding – the pursuit of the 'good life' through practices of what is known as 'consumerism' has become one of the dominant global social forces, cutting across differences of religion, class, gender, ethnicity and nationality. It is the other side of the dominant ideology of market globalism and is central to what Manfred Steger calls the 'global imaginary'.

Consumers' behaviour results from the characteristics of the product or brand concerned and is affected by large advertising actions. When the perception of the image of the product is positive, this helps the marketing of the product and thus fosters the practice of high prices. To influence the consumer, the company must know his/her mental behaviour because each person has his/her own personal image of a brand. The concept of branding occurs when someone wants to use this brand image to meet a need and to differentiate himself/herself according to his/her social status. Branding invades our professional and private life at every moment of our lives. We are solicited consciously and unconsciously by the images and the messages and symbols that they carry in them. (cf. Wheeler, 2009).

On the other hand, the democratization of images is raising new issues. It has been often said that the young generation is not reading anymore, but rather looking and feeding on fixed or animated images. This statement came with the appearance of social media and screens and the fact that young people are spending more time on their smartphones ⁴⁹. This myth is disputed by a significant part of the community of scientists and psychologists. According to a recent study made by the French Ministry of Culture, reading is still an "important" activity among young people, whether prescribed in school (89%) or freely chosen in recreation (78%). Indeed, on average, young people read six books a year, two of which are in school and four for leisure. ⁵⁰

Indeed, even if young people read as much as the older generation, the image has more importance for the former. Before being able to speak, humans see and associate images with the world surrounding them. But something is missing in the way people are educated,

⁴⁹ For more information, see Willet (2016). "A study says teens are spending nearly all their waking hours staring at screens". Available at <http://www.businessinsider.com/teens-average-phone-screen-usage-2016-5>. Last viewed on 02/09/2017.

⁵⁰ Study from the Ministère de la culture (2016). "Enquête les jeunes et la lecture". Available at <http://www.culturecommunication.gouv.fr/Actualites/Enquete-les-jeunes-et-la-lecture>. Last viewed on 02/09/2017.

especially at school when media play the role of a “parallel school”⁵¹. As much one learns to read, as much the pedagogy of the image is non-existent. The reading of an image is never taught at a young age, and children are not given the tools to understand images and the implications of their use:

Western society has learned to treat images as signs. This conception of the image has allowed it, since the Renaissance, to appropriate the world. But it also prevents it today from understanding the stakes of new forms of images. It is the real danger. It is not the image that must be feared; it is the inadequacy of our traditional conceptual tools in relation to it.⁵²

Images are not taken seriously in our education system. The study of images is still considered less important than traditional subjects, such as mathematics, literature or history. The long-term consequences of this position could be problematic if no one realizes the intellectual potential of images. Peyrègne (1963), Inspector General of the French National Education tried to present in his essay “Respecter la particularité de formes: Pour la pédagogie de l’image” different arguments in favour of a pedagogical change. An image is one of the most powerful tools to lead the world and the collective awareness. It would be a waste for humanity not to use it for educational purposes, such as the increase of knowledge, the development of citizenship, to exercise critical judgment, or to train taste. It is crucial to save the aptitude to learn, understand, judge and feel in a society that is moving fast. Images are a chance to develop new perspectives in a better match with our today issues. Photography is an unlimited source of knowledge of universal values. When compared to literature, pictures use the same language all over the world without the need for any translation. It is obvious that not every picture is not good to be analysed. Describing a picture is not enough to interpret it. The description is part of the process, but providing the picture with a context supports an educational approach:

⁵¹ Term used by Fadhel and Slah (2007: 133-138).

⁵² English translation by the student of the original quote “L’Occident a appris à traiter les images comme des signes. Cette conception de l’image lui a permis, depuis la Renaissance, de s’approprier le monde. Mais elle l’empêche aussi aujourd’hui de comprendre les enjeux des nouvelles formes d’images. Tel est le véritable danger. Ce n’est pas l’image qu’il faut redouter, c’est l’insuffisance de nos outils conceptuels traditionnels face à elle” Tisseron (1996).

Images should not be treated as mere teaching aids or end-of-term recreations. They must become systematically teaching materials. And it is necessary that this coordination of all disciplines, which is the object of so many pious wishes, must be organized for it, as it is true that certain teachings, including the teachings, in particular, have difficulty in recognizing their cultural value alongside other specialties.

⁵³

In his book *Enfance et Psy* (2007)⁵⁴, Ben Fadhel, doctor in psychology, tried to study the relation between the socialization of the kids with images. In general, research in psychology on children's development shows the need for the child to develop personal links with real partners. Nowadays, it is observed that the massive and earlier presence of images in the universe of the child has some effects on these real links. The child is in a relationship that does not allow him/her to interact or oppose and manifest his/her differences as he/she can in the relationships with others. The child is confined to a role of consumer and imitator of images. In the absence of productive interactions, television does not help the child in his/her individualization process and his/her awareness of himself.

On the other hand, socialization through images also has the characteristic of relying more on the child's emotions than on his/her cognitive abilities. (cf. Malewska-Peyre, Tap, 1991) The effectiveness of image and advertising, for example, mainly reflects emotions in the child's life and natural immaturity, and the image industry exploits a certain insufficiency of the child's critical mind. Children thus constitute a privileged target for advertisers who increasingly try to create and impose new needs in their homes, thus shaping their attitudes and behaviours.

⁵³ English translation by the student of the original quote "les images ne doivent pas être traitées comme de simples auxiliaires de l'enseignement, ni comme des récréations de fin de semaine ou de fin de trimestre. Elles doivent devenir systématiquement objet et matière d'enseignement. Et il faut que soit organisée, pour cela, cette coordination de toutes les disciplines, qui est l'objet de tant de vœux pieux, mais dont chacun sait qu'elle est rarement assurée, tant il est vrai que certains enseignements, dont les enseignements artistiques en particulier, ont de peine à faire reconnaître leur valeur culturelle à côté d'autres spécialités", *Ibid*: 165.

⁵⁴ Term used by Fadhel and Slah Edine (2007). "L'enfant et l'image: socialisation et développement cognitive" *Enfances et psy*. France: Eres. pp. 133-138.

2.2 The advertising industry

It is important to study the evolution of the advertising industry and its influence to understand the impact of commercial photography. For that, we will focus on the case of France to reduce the amount of information and have a clear idea of its development. Driven by the economic boom of the “Trente Glorieuses”⁵⁵, advertising has been growing quantitatively and qualitatively during 40 years. Indeed, certain factors favoured its rapid development within our society. These technological or managerial changes led to a different consumption of the image in a more instructive way.

The emergence and consecration of marketing as a discipline of management and as complementary for strategic decisions have changed roles in the advent of advertising.

Some companies, such as Publicis, became the leader in advertisement (4th largest advertising company in the world) after the war.⁵⁶ They developed an extensive range of services for national and international companies. Today, Publicis develop advertising solutions for all different media and assists the client in the production of visual campaigns.

In 2016 the French advertising industry represented € 13.3 billion of net revenue. This number includes all the media present in the French market, such as traditional media (TV+ unaddressed print + cinema + outdoor advertising), online publicity (Internet) and other media (Radio, press). Even if the net revenue remains the same as 2015, it is boosted by the increase of the traditional and online media net revenues. According to IREP (Institut des Recherches et Etudes Publicitaires) the two media total an increase of 1,1% if compared to 2015⁵⁷ (image 23).

This more favourable situation in 2016 is mainly due to the significant growth of Internet, + 7.0% compared to 2015. It is driven by the display in strong progression of video formats, of mobile and social networks. This growth is also due to the good performance of certain

⁵⁵ “Trente Glorieuses” is a term native from the French language used to describe the thirty-year period in which France economy rapidly grew. It is the silent revolution carrying with it major economic and social changes, which marked the passage of Europe to the consumer society. The French economist Jean Fourastié coined this term for the title of his book. See Fourastié (1979).

⁵⁶ For more information about Publicis history, see Hultquist (2008).

⁵⁷ See FrancePub, IREP (2016: 1)

historical media: Cinema, + 8.9% in 2016 vs + 1.8% in 2015, Outdoor advertising, + 3.1% in 2016, vs. -0.6% in 2015, Television, + 0.4% vs + 0.6% in 2015, and unaddressed print that is recovering, + 0.8% vs. -0.6% in 2015.

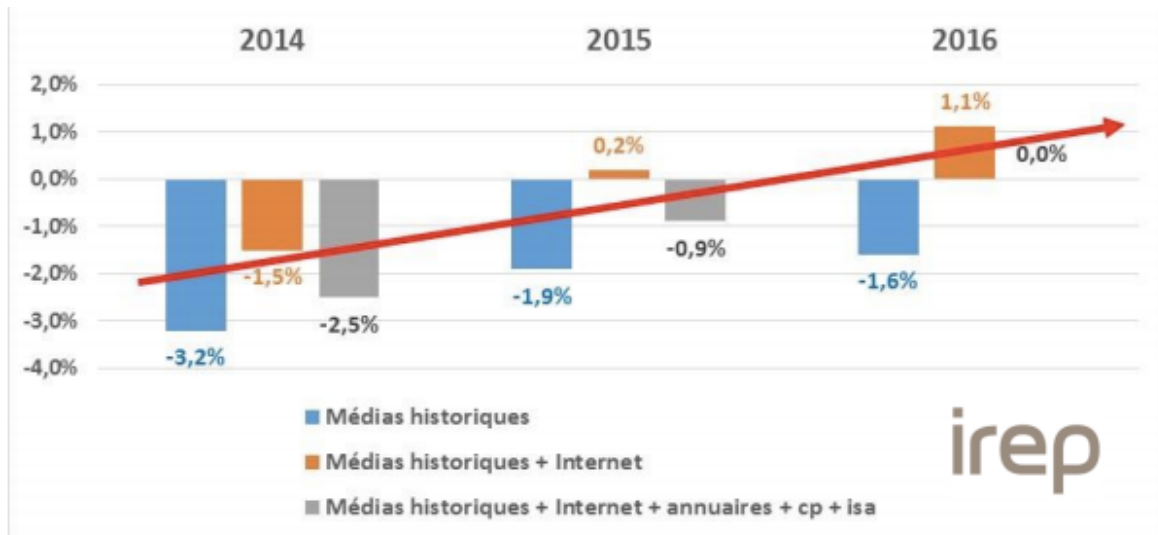


Image 23: Annual evolution of the advertising net revenue since 2014 ⁵⁸

The graph above shows that the French advertising market has been in net progression since 2014. Despite the decrease in the interest for historical and other media, the large increase of the online publicity balances the global evolution (0,0% in 2016).

For 2017, the IREP forecasts that economic growth for France will range from + 1.2% to + 1.5%, depending on the observers, an evolution close to the one observed in 2016. On the other hand, while 2016 was a "sporting year" favourable to the market, 2017 is the year of the elections, which generally represents a less positive period for the same market.

We can observe a real change in the way of consuming advertising since the beginning of the 21st century. The development of television in the 1960s has totally changed the way of consuming. It is a privileged medium of advertising, and it has seen the birth of cult programs such as teleshopping, which consisted in selling 'indispensable' products to households. Television has replaced the profession of a salesperson thanks to its innovative advertising and slogans that now belong to our culture.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*: 2.

“Culture Pub”, for example, was a show presented on Paris Première channel from 1986 to 1987 and then on M6 from 1987 until 1989, which dissected the TV’s adverts. The show was at the same time an analysis of television advertising, and also an incredible library of advertising archives. “Culture Pub” remains a unique example of a television program aimed at breaking advertising down and commenting on it in a critical but also humorous tone, on a commercial channel financed by advertising.

But the rise of the Internet marked the “end” or at least a change in the traditional advertising. Even if we observe that revenues generated by traditional media have been increasing since 2014 (image 23), they are losing market share to the benefit of digital advertising. In 2016, digital advertising exceeded TV advertising for the first time in history (image 24).

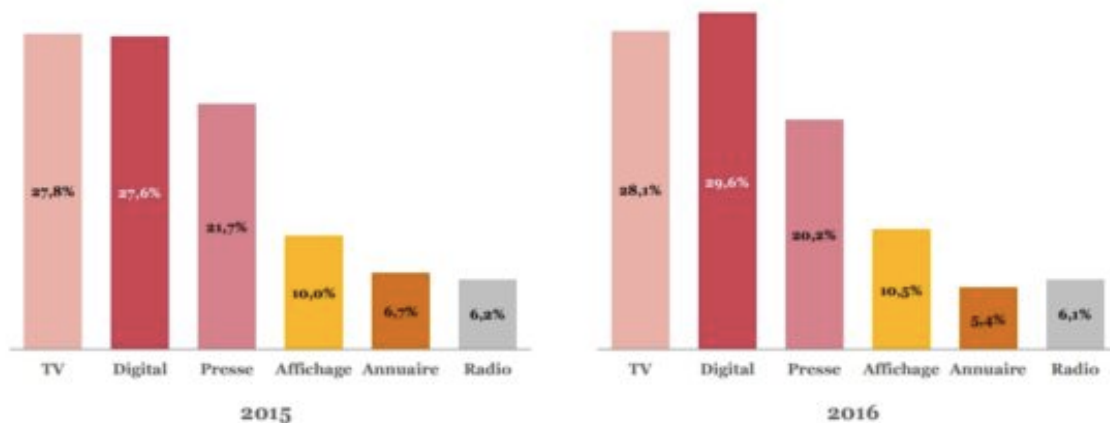


Image 24: Annual evolution of advertising market in France from 2015 to 2016 ⁵⁹

The video artist David Hall tried to represent in his final piece called *1001 TV sets (End piece)* the disappearance of analog TV. Indeed, David Hall was the pioneer in establishing video as an art form. He introduced videos in museums using principally TVs in the 1970s. His first multi-channel video installation shown in the UK was his *60 TV Sets* at the exhibition *A Survey of the Avant-Garde in Britain*, in 1972.

⁵⁹ Coëffé, Thomas (2017). *Annual evolution of advertising market in France from 2015 to 2016*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.blogdumoderateur.com/observatoire-e-pub-17/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

As a final tribute to TV, he exposed 1001 cathode ray tube TV sets, of various ages, all tuned to random channels which, as the signals were turned off between April 4-14, would gradually change the sound in the space from a cacophony of overlapping audio to a hiss of white noise.⁶⁰ It coincided with the switch-off of analog broadcast transmissions in the London area. It symbolized the end of an era as well as the end of his work which would be replaced by digitalization.

Internet demands for images are exponentially growing especially with social media. Instagram, for example, is an application, a social network and a service for sharing photos and videos. Instagram boasts over 600 million users with 400 million visiting it every day worldwide. Along with Snapchat, Instagram is one of the hottest social media platforms going right now. According to the magazine *Forbes*, “the platform has officially surpassed 1 million monthly advertisers. It’s a big achievement for the photo-sharing platform, and a mark of how far it’s come”.⁶¹ The application owned by Facebook is about to become more important than the famous social media especially for teens. The value of a person is calculated by the pictures he/she takes, shares or likes. More than text, images are representing who you are and what you like. People are now following other people for their pictures and they try to identify themselves with the visual identity that emerges from it. Instagram is, for brands, an incredible opportunity to reach a large worldwide community at a very low cost. More than changing the way of consuming advertising, it has also changed the way of producing it.

Many companies focus on the aesthetics of their photographs to attract readers. Indeed, television and the print media require more than analytical or factual information; they also need illustrations. We can identify three main types of photography usually used in the advertising industry. The first one is the commercial photograph, which sells a product (images 25 to 27). Here, the style, the lighting, and the background are often straightforward.

⁶⁰ Urban75, “David Hall: End Piece at Ambika P3”, Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 19 March 2012. Web. 17/09/2017.

⁶¹ See Shaoolian (2017). “Is Instagram Advertising The Right Social Media Platform For Your Brand?” Available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gabrielshaoolian/2017/04/13/is-instagram-advertising-the-right-social-media-platform-for-your-brand/#364f1a742d36>. Last viewed on 12/09/2017.

We think of photos for magazines with models in front of a white background or other with possibly a flash above or next to the camera with a simple and natural makeup. This type of photography is often used in cosmetic, perfume, jewellery or the food industry. The picture must sublimate the product, so that the consumer wants to buy it.



Image 25 (left): La Prairie, (2016), Jeremy Zenou ⁶²

Image 26 (centre): Guide Lebey, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes ⁶³

Image 27 (right): Boucheron, (2016), Jeremy Zenou ⁶⁴

The second type is the fashion photography, which sells a lifestyle. Unlike commercial photography, the emphasis on fashion photography is not about clothing, but the ambiance of style and image in a particular environment. Clothes are accessories to convey a specific lifestyle. The image is more complex, with a more advanced style and an elaborated makeup. Lighting is often more sophisticated and refined with the use of more than one light source. The shooting can be inside or outside depending on the ambiance the brand wants to create. Calvin Klein, for example, decided to represent "the cinematic and romantic outsider's view of America" in his last campaign for the fall and winter collection created by Raf Simons. It

⁶² Zenou (2016). *La Prairie*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/jeremy-zenou/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

⁶³ Dhellemmes (2017). *Guide Lebey*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/thomas-dhellemmes/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

⁶⁴ Zenou (2016). *Boucheron*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/jeremy-zenou/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

is a journey in the desert like people can imagine when they think about the road 66 and the American road trip (image 28). According to a press release of the brand,

The campaign is a study in art and artifice, of the real and the imagined, the mannered world of high fashion combined with a sense of the everyday. Ultimately, the campaign explores the cinematic and romantic outsider's view of America, something of a dream world that has become concrete for chief creative officer Raf Simons and creative director Pieter Mulier.⁶⁵



Image 28: Ad Campaign | Calvin Klein F/W 2017 by Willy Vanderperre

The final type is the editorial photography, which sells a story. It looks a bit like the fashion photography in the sense that the aim of the editorial photography is not to sell a product, but something bigger. In fashion photography, it is the lifestyle that is important; in the editorial, it is the story about the theme. Just as with fashion photography, lighting is paramount. For example, you are shooting an editorial about a woman's journey. If the story is about joy and happiness, you would use a very friendly and natural lighting to accentuate

⁶⁵ Reyes (2017). "Ad Campaign | Calvin Klein F/W 2017 by Willy Vanderperre". Available at <https://fashionights.com/ad-campaign-calvin-klein-fw-2017-by-willy-vanderperre/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

this theme. Nevertheless, if the editorial is about the dangers of travel, lighting would be more dramatic, and instead of photographing a sunny beach, you could choose a dark alley. In this case, the picture illustrated a text; it is here as a support to tangibly visualize what it is said (images 29 to 31).



Image 29 (left): *Guide Lebey*, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes ⁶⁶
 Image 30 (centre): *Fou de Cuisine*, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes ⁶⁷
 Image 31(right): *Duval Leroy*, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes ⁶⁸

The photographic style depends on the needs of the client and what he/she wants. Each style has a different need, and it is necessary to design it carefully to reach the right target. The STP model⁶⁹ needs to be used to build a targeting marketing plan whether to sell a lifestyle associated with the product, to simply show a product or to support a story. A good photographer can deliver quality work in all these areas. But in practice each photographer

⁶⁶ Dhellemmes (2016). *Guide Lebey*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/thomas-dhellemmes/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

⁶⁷ Dhellemmes (2016). *Fou de cuisine*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/thomas-dhellemmes/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

⁶⁸ Dhellemmes (2016). *Duval Leroy*. [Online image]. Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/photographies/thomas-dhellemmes/>. Last viewed on 13/09/2017.

⁶⁹The STP model is a marketing model used to identify the right target for your product. « S » stands from Segmentation, « T » stands for targeting and « P » stands for positioning. For more information, read Kokemuller. “What is STP marketing?” Available at <http://yourbusiness.azcentral.com/stp-marketing-1769.html>. Last viewed on 21/09/2017.

is specialized in a specific field. Codes and techniques change according to the environment in which we move and each style of photography requires different aptitudes and a different approach.

Moreover, the advertising industry is a complex system, which includes many stakeholders and many different possibilities. Image 32 presents different levels of hierarchy and operations required to create an advertising campaign.

To better understand how it works, we will use the example of Chanel, one of the most famous luxury brands in the world. When Chanel wants to create a new advertising campaign, they have different options.

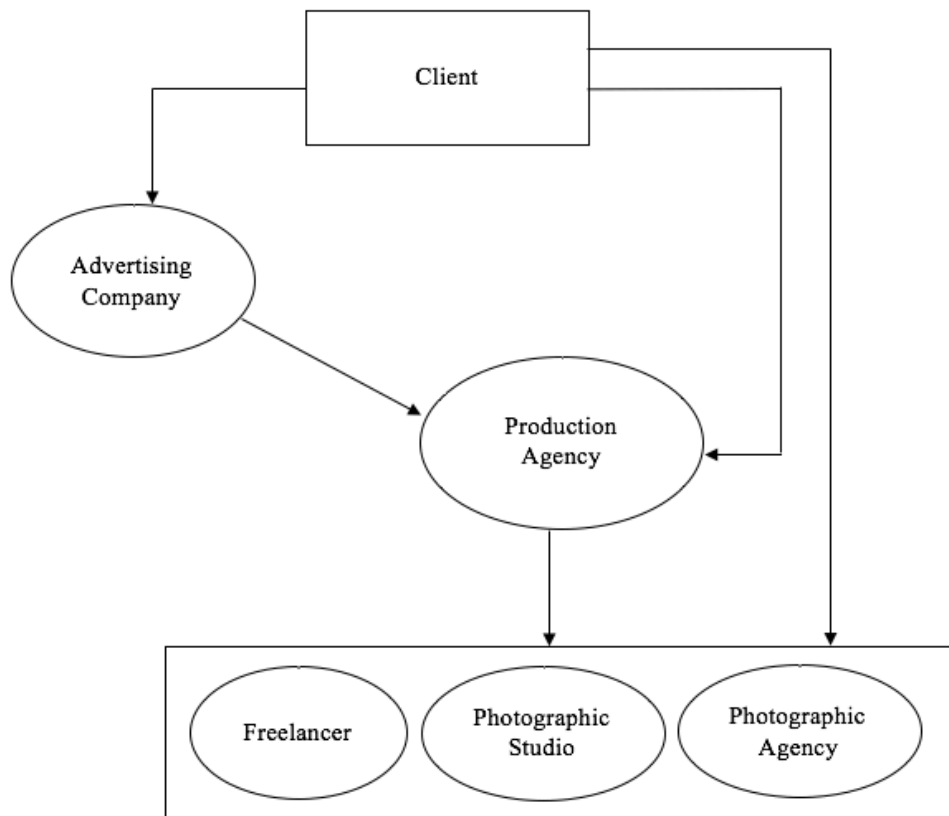


Image 32: Organizational chart of the advertising image industry

As Chanel is a multinational company, the distribution is an essential factor when they want to release a new project. For that, they can contract an advertising company, such as Publicis that is going to take care of the production and the distribution of the advertising among the different supports. Most times this company will contract a production agency to organize the shooting. The production agency, 5 étoiles Production in Paris, for example, will gather the people needed in order to create the visuals wished by Chanel. They will employ a professional photographer, a makeup artist, the models, a plastic artist if required for the shooting. The photographer can work as a freelancer, can belong to a photographic studio, or to a photographic agency. This photographic agency is a company that manages the work and distributes the photographs. It is the link between the photographer and the advertising agency, the production company or the client.

The more you have stakeholders the more expensive it will be for the client as everybody is charging for his work. The two other options for Chanel are to directly contact the production agency if they already have a distribution plan or to contact the photographer himself and do the photo shoot.

Atelier Mai 98 (where I did my six months' internship in Paris) is a photographic studio specialized in the luxury market. Created in 1998 by the photographer Thomas Dhellemmes⁷⁰, it is now well-known in the Parisian sphere.

Indeed, the luxury market is a singular universe that has always aroused envy and desire among consumers. A luxury product can be recognized by its sophistication, its price (which is usually higher than it should be), and its symbolism. Luxury, as it is now understood, finds its origin in the habits of ancient families of high society. It refers to the exceptional and it is the symbol of an accomplished social success, but also of refinement and of love for the "beautiful". By definition, luxury "à la française" combines tradition, know-how and glamour. It is an economic engine of the first order and demonstrates irreproachable health even in times of crisis. This development started in the second half of the 20th century. The year 1980 marked a decisive turning point in the history of the French luxury market when small independent houses gathered in large economic groups.

⁷⁰ See the interview Thomas Dhellemmes gave to me on page 87.

The experience of the team and the expertise in luxury codes daily conduct the Atelier Mai 98 to work with the largest companies in its studio-loft, and to accompany them in each of the creative steps: from the design of a universe, to the shooting of their know-how and their creativity. The studio mostly works for cuisine and gastronomy, watchmaking and jewellery, architecture and art of living, beauty and the perfume industry⁷¹. L'Atelier Mai 98 is selling an environment, and an ambiance to respond to the requirements of the luxury market. Most times the pictures become an object themselves, driven by their composition and own will.

2.3 Pictures as objects of consumption

By becoming an object through the magic of printing and presentation, photography competes with objects in the real world. And in this context we are obliged to recognize some strength with respect to its environment. In *What do pictures want?* (2005), W.J.T. Mitchell explains how our society has moved into a visual world or what he calls a "pictorial turn" in contemporary culture. Indeed, the realm of images and pictures is now considered as important as the realm of language. It marks an important change in our modern society if compared to the "linguistic turn" developed in Western philosophy by intellectuals, such as Richard Rorty in 1964.⁷²

Mitchell's study shows that visual elements of advertisements can affect people's attitudes toward the brand. The customers can make assumptions about the brand based on the visual information presented to them. These presumptions may "lead to the formation or change of belief in the advertised mark" (Mitchell, 2001: 21). This positive or negative image given by the visual elements can lead the company to adopt strategic changes.

Imagined in the early 1960s by the advertising agency Leo Burnett, the Marlboro Man campaign and its environment, the Marlboro Country, were launched in 1963.

Darrell Winfield, a cowboy from Oklahoma, was the original "Marlboro man" from 1968 to 1989 (image 33). Subsequently dozens of actors played the role of the cowboy to promote the brand in campaigns in the press or on television. It was cool and wild to smoke Marlboro cigarettes, the brand for the real man in America.

⁷¹ For more information about l'Atelier Mai 98 see Atelier Mai 98. "L'actu". Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/>. Last viewed on: 15/09/2017.

⁷² See Rorty (1967).

In 1997, Philip Morris withdrew the Marlboro Man from his advertising campaigns in the United States since five of the actors/models who played the character died from a disease related to their long-standing smoking. Two cases were particularly high-profile because they each carried out a tobacco control: Wayne McLaren who had lent his traits for a Marlboro campaign in 1976, and David McLean, who appeared in numerous brand and television ads of the brand at the beginning of the 1960s.

This case had some dramatic consequences for the cigarette manufacturer that became the primary target of anti-tobacco associations. It was also used to prohibit tobacco advertising. Called the Evin's law in France and applied in 1991, it prohibits any direct or indirect propaganda or advertising in favour of tobacco as well as any free or promotional distribution or any tobacco sponsorship. The movie *Thank you for Smoking* (2005) by Jason Reitman illustrates the fall of the tobacco industry through the eyes of one of its lobbyists.

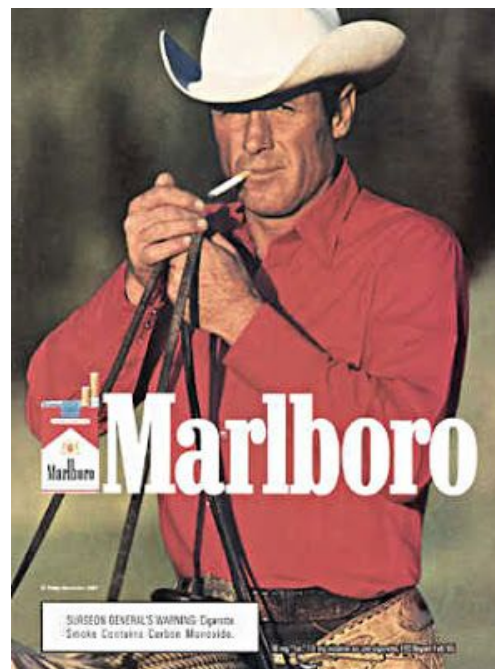
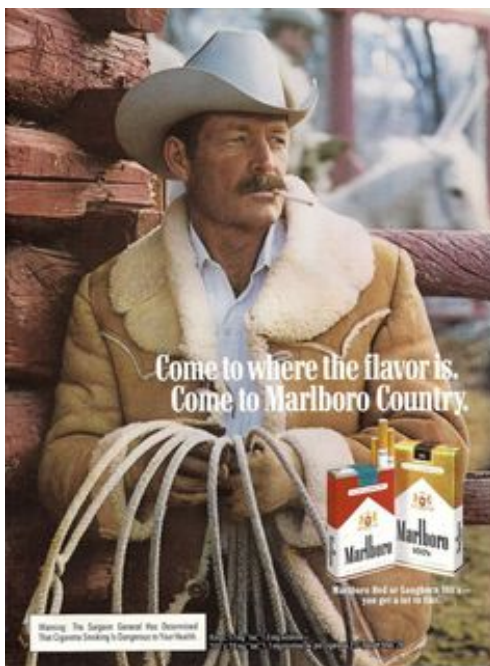


Image 33 (left): Darrell Winfield - Marlboro Man, (1979), Marlboro ⁷³
 Image 34 (right): Wayne McLaren - Marlboro Man, (1976), Marlboro ⁷⁴

⁷³ Marlboro (1979). *The Marlboro Man (Darrell Winfield)*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/396809417143448319/>. Last viewed on 18/09/2017.

⁷⁴ Marlboro (1976). *The Marlboro Man (Wayne McLaren)*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/162340761541570157/>. Last viewed on 18/09/2017.

We can speak of the fetishization of the image when its use confers on it an autonomous value, which predominates with the original goal for which it was planned. The image no longer refers directly to the represented subject, but acquires a self-meaning that seems natural. The image is thus disconnected from the human relationships that are at its origin. While the stereotype is an agreed and rehashed form of representation, the fetishization of the image makes us forget the object of this representation. Beyond the stereotype, the fetishization of the image is a visual form that overflows its original subject by constructing another form, independent and dominant, by the crushing of the first significations. Fetishization is the representation devoid of its original meaning, like a gift paper without its gift. It is like an envelope, an empty promise.

The term fetishization is for the first time used by Karl Marx in 1867 in his book *Capital: Critique of Political Economy*. Commodity fetishism is the phenomenon, in which in capitalist production the commodity serves as a support for the relations between beings, so that this commodity shapes their production and the factors of distribution, thus giving the appearance that these social relations of production and distribution of goods finalize relations between things.

The fetishization of the image is even stronger when the image becomes an object of commercial exchange. It is no longer the aesthetics, the emotion, the meaning, the history, the memory, the subject, the knowledge or the discovery that is the artwork, but the object, the image in itself. The image as merchandise has become an economic value disconnected from its primary role of an intermediary in the exchange between humans. It participates in the alienation of human activity. In the immense spectacle of the images that surround us, the image sometimes seems to work autonomously, like the air we breathe. At any moment of our existence we ask the question of how our lungs function.

The multiplication of intermediaries and diffusion modes, the multiplication of objects and techniques, and the appropriation of images facilitated by the digital, put a distance between the author and the viewer. With time, we forget that images were created by individuals with an intention, a comment, a point of view. We forget that in every image proposed to us there is in the beginning an original form of relations between the author and the spectator established through these images. We end up believing in an autonomous functioning of images, which are disconnected from the "exchange". Like merchandises, the exchange

value fades away, to leave only the value of use, fetishization. As Wittgenstein aptly points out:

...we regard the photograph, the picture on our wall, as the object itself (the man, landscape, and so on) depicted there. This need not have been so. We could easily imagine people who did not have this relation to such pictures. Who, for example, would be repelled by photographs, because a face without colour and even perhaps a face in reduced proportions struck them as inhuman.⁷⁵

The semiology of the image provides to advertising agencies with the methodological and conceptual tools for extending the merchandizing to all objects and products of consumption. The peculiarity of this appropriation has increased in the 1980s when many people claimed their belonging to a "culture of advertising".

In his essay "The Rhetoric of the Image" (1964), Roland Barthes used a Panzani advert to analyse the question of the semiology of the image and how different messages are conveyed by signs. According to his study, we can identify three classes of messages within an image. Barthes differentiates the linguistic messages (text), symbolic messages (or connoted image) and literal messages (or denoted image).



Image 35: Pates – Sauce – Parmesan à l’Italienne de luxe, (1964), Panzini ⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Sontag (1993 [1977]: 229).

⁷⁶ Image from Barthes, (1977 [1967]: 32-51).

Panzani (1964). *Pates – Sauce – Parmesan à l’Italienne de luxe*. [Online image]. Available at <https://tracesofthereal.com/2009/12/21/the-rhetoric-of-the-image-roland-barthes-1977/>. Last viewed on 26/07/2017.

The linguistic message is literally the text present in the image. Almost all images, in all contexts, are accompanied by some sort of linguistic message that seems to have two possible functions. It can be a *denoted message* which just names things in the picture. In that case (image 35), it is the brand Panzani and the categorization of the product “*pasta, sauce, parmesan*”. The second function is the *connoted message*, which implies an alternative meaning. The word “Panzani”, for example, refers to the Italian language and to a high-quality product.

On the other hand, the symbolic message or connoted image refers to the interpretation of what we see. The Panzani advert contains four of these. First of all, the half-open bag can signify the return from the local market, which means that the products are fresh; the tomatoes and peppers signify Italianicity and Italian culture; the collection of objects implies a total culinary service, and the overall composition refers to the notion of a still life.

Analysing the connoted image is very challenging. It depends on each interpretation and can have different ones according to people and culture. Any meaning depends on the viewer’s or the community’s background. Stereotypes also highly influence our interpretation. We find the same code in every advertisement to suggest a second meaning using an obvious object as, for example the French baguette to represent the French culture.

The most difficult for a company is to learn how to talk about this without offending part of the population. The key to success is to use *connotators* or visual elements in the frame of the image that do not raise political and social issues (Barthes, 1977).

The last point is the literal image or denoted image. It is for Barthes the “first degree of intelligibility”. It is what composes the photograph. The shape, the form, the colours instead of seeing, for example, a tomato. This absence of codes reinforces the photograph in itself and its natural aspect. It allows the image to be just an image and nothing more: just a set of technical characteristics.

Most adverts associate the image with a text. It is a support to increase the power of the message. We can identify two types of possible options.

The *anchorage* is when the text guides the viewer to choose the meaning of the image. It answers the question: what is it? By giving an explanation, it avoids any misunderstanding and does not give the viewer the chance to imagine what is wanted. According to Barthes

(1977), “the level of the literal message, the text replies – in a more or less direct, more or less partial manner – to the question: *what is it?* The text helps to identify purely and simply the elements of the scene and the scene itself.”

On the example below (image 36) the image is a French advertisement for a cheese representing an old man with a beret in the countryside. There are no houses, only agricultural field. Both the text on top “*The taste of authenticity*” plus the brand of the cheese “*Le Rustique*” (“*the rustic*” in English) are putting the focus on the old and traditional aspect of this cheese.



Image 36: Le Gôut de l’authentique, Le Rustique ⁷⁷

In opposition to the *anchorage*, we have the *relay*. In this case, the text and the image work together. They both give a different clue that helps the viewer to understand the general meaning and the unity behind the advert. They are complementary, and without one of them, the message wouldn’t be clear:

Here text (most often a snatch of dialogue) and image stand in a complementary relationship; the words, in the same way as the images, are fragments of a more general syntagm and the unity of the message is realized at a higher level, that of the story, the anecdote, the diegesis. (Barthes, 1977).

The McDonald’s advertising campaign *Venez comme vous êtes!* ⁷⁸ launched in France in 2007, is the perfect example of *relay*. In this campaign, McDonald’s used cartoon characters

⁷⁷ Kredens (2015). *La rhétorique de l’image Roland Barthes*. Slide 13. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.slideshare.net/elodiekredens/la-rhetorique-de-l-image-roland-barthes>. Last viewed on 18/09/2017.

⁷⁸ *Come as you are!* (translation by the student)

as customers, in order to suggest that the company is welcoming everyone regardless social, physical, or demographical criteria. The picture below (image 37) represents Cinderella from the Walt Disney cartoon when after midnight she transforms back into a maid with a pumpkin as a horse-drawn carriage. In this advert both the image and the text are important. Without the text we could interpret that McDonald's is a fairy place to go or that it transforms you in a negative way. This interpretation could have negative impact on the brand image, especially since McDonald's try to build an image of sustainability and health.



Image 37: Venez comme vous êtes, (2007), McDonald ⁷⁹

The analysis of an image must be reduced to its components. By forgetting the author, the context, and the different temporalities of the image and what makes it a fetish object we could understand the attributes of meaning. If we take up the basic distinction made by semiology between signifier and signified, and if we extend it to the concept of *representation* with *the representative* and *the represented*, we can say that the fetishization of the image is the fusion/confusion that operates between these two dimensions. The representative is the represented and vice versa.

⁷⁹ Image from Kredens (2015). *La rhétorique de l'image Roland Barthes*. Slide 14. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.slideshare.net/elodiekredens/la-rhetorique-de-limage-roland-barthes>. Last viewed on 18/09/2017.

3. Alteration of reality

3.1 The power of images

Many iconic pictures of the war such as the execution of a Vietcong guerilla by Eddie Adams⁸⁰ during the Vietnam war or the man standing in from the tank line in Beijing by Stuart Franklin⁸¹ had a negative and lasting impact on the public feeling. One of the most emblematic pictures was taken by Nick Ut during the Vietnam war⁸². It shows a naked girl running towards the photographer after being burnt in a napalm bombing. This image remained anchored in the collective unconscious as a reference to this war. Poignant. Shattering. One feels as if has just received a punch in the face, and this causes nausea. It shows the undisguised horror of war and suffering imposed on civilians, on innocent victims, such as children. After many demonstrations in Europe and the United States and an awareness of public opinion the government announced the end of the war.

Photography is a way to challenge traditional viewing and thinking habits and to organize them differently. Jenny Kitzinger (1997) offers a particularly sophisticated interpretation of the relationship between the media and the public. For her, the media power of persuasion, based on repulsive images, strike the common imaginations for the same reasons they have attracted media attention. These images remain imprinted in the memory of those who have seen them through how they are raised and revived in everyday experience.

For instance, in 2009, France has voted to put some shocking images on cigarette packages as the usual text “smoking kills” had almost no impact on the consumer. This new campaign is here to provoke shock and catch smoker’s attention. The visual material deeply permeates into memory and the intensity of visual material makes it powerful.

⁸⁰ See *The tank men*, 1989 by Stuart Franklin available at <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/photography-blog/2014/jun/03/stuart-franklin-tiananmen-square-tank-man>. Last viewed on: 19/09/2017.

⁸¹ See *Saigon execution*, 1968 by Eddie Adams available at <http://rarehistoricalphotos.com/saigon-execution-1968/>. Last viewed on: 19/09/2017.

⁸² See *Phan Thi Kim Phuc*, 1972 by Nick Ut available at <https://pieceofmindful.com/2016/12/12/phan-thi-kim-phuc-another-long-running-psyop/>. Last viewed on: 19/09/2017.

In today's society photography is used to capture the viewer's attention. Indeed, the most striking distinction between the effects of the textual/verbal versus visual messages is the emotional impact. Image is the most powerful and emotionally charged element in the communication process. In fact, the image makes it possible to transmit, in the blink of an eye, an enormous amount of information, the greater part of which the viewer is not aware of.

The image can be directly interpreted by everyone without distinctions of language, social status or intellectual capacity. However, written texts have to pass through many filters before they can transmit their message. Images have the ability to train people emotionally, while the textual or verbal material allows people to think in a more rational way. They can transmit a message that is not perverted by an opinion or a positioning that can make the interpretation much more difficult. If compared to drawings or texts, the image constitutes a universal language that doesn't change according to the viewer's culture, since as Helmut Gernsheim (1962) aptly points out,

Photography is the only "language" understood in all parts of the world, and bridging all nations and cultures, it links the family of man. Independent of political influence – where people are free – it reflects truthfully life and events, allows us to share in the hopes and despair of others, and illuminates political and social conditions. We become the eye-witnesses of the humanity and inhumanity of mankind.

Why do we have visceral reactions to images? Why do we confer on them such power? Why do we make ourselves as if the images were alive, likely to seduce us, to act in a certain way and sometimes even to lead us astray?

For W.J.T. Mitchell (2001), one of the major figures in visual studies in the United States, images are not just inert objects carrying meanings, but beings animated by desires, needs and demands. Images can be very influential and can be used to change the opinion about someone or a special event. Newhagen and Reeves (1992) studied the consequences of the abundance of negative images on television. They found out that human memory is more active when viewing negative images than when it is confronted to text or audio news. Image leads the viewer to forget the verbal message and less important visual elements.

Memory better retains non-semantic noises, such as screams or crash noises than speeches. That is why it is more difficult to stay for hours reading than watching movies. The memory

is not working in remembering the actual meaning of the information, but it is just reading the image without activating cognitive functions.

Readers feel more emotionally involved when news is associated to photographs. The latter help viewers visualize the word and have a concrete perception of what is happening. Text, on the other hand, leaves room for imagination and speculation. Words are on certain occasions not enough to describe an event. It is what we call ineffable: incapable of being expressed in words. This category of words mostly includes feelings. Indeed, it is very difficult for someone to explain joy, sadness, or even an orgasm.

Consequently, the text arouses less emotion and generates less reactions. A simple photograph can serve as an object that elicits emotion and changes our perception depending on the positive or the negative impression it releases since, according to Doris A. Graber (1996: 87), “combining pictures with words makes the message more memorable”. In other words, the human brain absorbs more information from visual messages.

This is exactly the premise on which the American artist Barbara Kruger based her work. She became famous by her photomontages of black and white press photographs juxtaposed with aggressive slogans, written in white on a red background. Kruger appropriates advertising images from our consumer society and mixes them with concise and aggressive texts that involve the viewer. Her work aims to denounce the cultural constructions of power, identity, and sexuality. Kruger belongs to the postmodern movement within the framework of which artists try to differentiate their works from the theoretical codes and the “suitable”. With her work, *Untitled, (We Don't Need Another Hero)* (1989) (image 38) she used one of the 1942 posters by J. Howard Miller named *Rosie the Riveter*, well known as *We Can Do It!* This poster was created during World War Two to recruit women to join the work force. It represents a young girl leaning over the little boy's arm and pointing out to his muscles. The girl respects the boy for his strength and his powerful character. At that time women were still considered as “inferior” to men and confined to their maternal role.

The 1980s represents a radical change for women's rights and liberty. Many protest movements developed in Europe to deconstruct power and social role. The vote of the Veil Law in France in 1975⁸³ marked a fundamental advancement in women's rights and gender

⁸³ Veil law, is a law framing a decriminalization of abortion in France. It was prepared by Simone Veil, Minister of Health under the chairmanship of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

equality. By using the word “hero”, Kruger wanted to break down the image of the weak girl in a society controlled essentially by men. Being a hero did not mean focusing on muscularity but it also meant being smart. The text Kruger used on this work was the key element, because it reversed the reading of the image. Instead of learning from the boy, it seemed that the girl was controlling him. She looked smarter than him and could control man’s behaviour. It was a support to the feminist cause and a denunciation of our preconceived ideas. But the impact of this billboard is due to the association of the text with the image. They both say different things, but putting them together can change one’s individual perception. Firstly, the image draws the attention, it is what we see first and then the text written in red gives it all its power.



Image 38: Untitled (We Don't Need Another Hero), (1986), Barbara Kruger ⁸⁴

In 1983 David Cronenberg had a vision of what would become the television and the image and the place they would occupy in our lives. The television screen comfortably placed in our homes enters our intimate lives. The video *Videodrome* (1983) precisely tries to show that television has the power to dictate our unsuspected desires, our most terrible impulses and Max Renn, director of a television channel broadcasting soft porn would be the victim of this manipulation. From the moment he watched *Videodrome*, he became completely obsessed with the program. The images haunted his mind. However, the debate remained

⁸⁴ Kruger (1986). *Untitled, (We Don't Need Another Hero)*. [Online image]. Available at <https://medium.com/@aaliacoovadia/postmodern-features-explained-through-we-dont-need-another-hero-by-barbara-kruger-b7a1668fc683>. Last viewed on 22/09/2017.

open: could television satisfy all the viewer's desires or was it only a reflection of the latter's desires? Indeed, the programs broadcast are created and chosen by human beings and not by television itself. Television would then reveal the viewer's desires.

David Cronenberg went much further and combined the theme of television and the transformation of the human body. Like a scientist, he observed how the human body supported the influences of television. The Canadian director demonstrated that the television screen was like an integral part of the human body or rather an outgrowth, an extension of the human being himself. In the movie, Professor O'Blivion stated: "The television screen has become the retina of the eyes of the mind." The boundary between reality and the virtual was finer than ever. If the TV screen replaced the eyes, then where was the reality? Was reality the result of what television showed? As Max Renn will demonstrate, the boundary between reality and the virtual can be quickly crossed. And, once crossed, it is difficult to go back and distinguish the real from the non-real.

But if one is aware of the dangerous powers of television and images, why do we not distrust them? Television seems to have a fascinating power. The immateriality of images makes freezing a moment possible, someone in a precise moment, thus making him/her live forever.

3.2 The duty of truth

Do photographs tell the truth? This question concerns as much social scientists and photographers, although both of them follow different paths to find an answer to this question. The relationship between truth and photography is much more ambivalent for photographers than for scientists. Photographers often adopt a strategy of trying to win on both sides, letting us hear, without really saying it, that the photographs convey an important or essential truth about what they describe. They know perfectly well that images represent only a small, carefully selected sample of the real world from which they are supposed to convey some truth. They know that the choices they make - choice of the moment, of place and people, choice of distance and angle, framing and tone - produced a different effect from the same reality. They are afraid of being accused of biasing reality, because someone else could have photographed the same object in a different way. This pressure essentially derives from the history of photography. As Susan Sontag explains (1977: 110):

The consequences of lying have to be more central for photography than they ever can be for painting, because the flat, usually rectangular images which are photographs make a claim to be true that paintings can never make. A fake painting (one whose attribution is false) falsifies the history of art. A fake photograph (one which has been retouched or tampered with, or whose caption is false) falsifies reality.

Most of us are wondering if the photographs we are making and looking at are "true" and if they can be regarded as true by other people watching them. A study from UK Safer Internet Centre ⁸⁵ about the power of image has questioned children from 8 to 17 years old about their critical thinking of images and online videos. The results (image 39) show that 70% of the 8-17 years old consider that images can be misleading and are not always telling the truth. This percentage increases with the age. It represents 66% of the 8-13 years old for 75% among the 13-17 years old. It seems that young people are careful with what they see and with the manipulation of images.

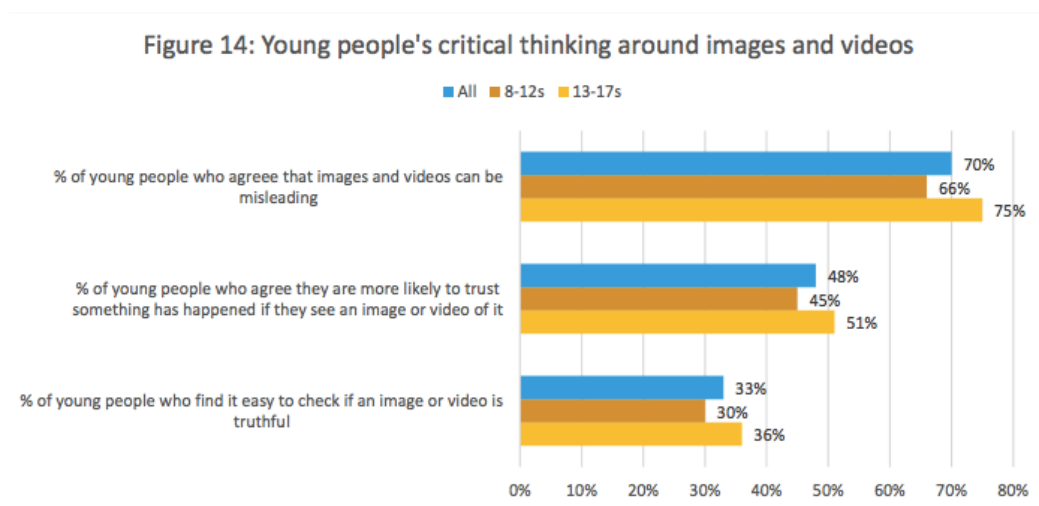


Image 39: Young people's critical thinking around images and videos ⁸⁶

To clarify matters, it is important to give up the question: "Is this true?". Since every photograph is born when the light rays emitted by a thing come up against the film, it is obviously true. But at the same time, as it could always have been taken differently, it cannot be the whole truth, so it is obviously false. To better understand this issue, we need to refine

⁸⁵ UK Safer Internet Centre (2017). *Power of Image. A report into the influence of images, and videos in young people's digital lives.* p.29.

⁸⁶ Image available at UK Safer Internet Centre (2017: 29).

it and ask: “About what does this photograph tell the truth?”. Generally, photographs contain enough information to use them as evidence on more than one theme. The first step is to understand what we can learn from them, which information is present in the picture.

Moreover, the “truth” does not necessarily need to be the “whole truth”. Since images often contain a multitude of information, it is not surprising that more than one truth can be derived from a single image. If this happens, it only means that we ask a photograph different questions that deserve and receive different answers. Ordinarily, the truth will not be brought by a single photographic image - what can we say about the truth based on only one picture? The answer is usually: nothing at all. Most times, we answer to important questions by taking into account all kinds of evidence, balancing all the factual fragments at our disposal in order to arrive at the best opinion we can provide on a given proposal. Berenice Abbott, for example, denounces that the ‘pictorial picture’⁸⁷ when compared to the ‘natural images’ promote the artificial invention. (cf. Abbot, 1951).

To emphasize, as Abbott does, that realism is the essence of photography is not enough to establish the superiority of a particular method or norm. It does not mean that the photo-document is better than the pictorial photograph. It is possible to give a mere interpretation of the world as it is possible to give a broader interpretation, which could be inspired by painting. (Sontag, 1977: 146). Photography is confined to its duty of truth that prevents it from having a new and different vision of the world

Some photographic genres are more subject to the duty of truth than others. This approach is better understood when the message the photograph wants to express is analysed. It is clear that when Helmut Newton produces fashion series for many magazines, especially to Vogue, he does not want to represent the reality. His style, sometimes of sensual subjectivity, is marked by eroticism, stylized scenes and often underlying violence. Nude pictures and fashion photography are both distanced from the reality. They sell an alternative reality in which sensuality and attitude are ruling the world. Everything is fake and real at the same time. People and objects on the photograph may have been staged by the photographer or by

⁸⁷ The term is used by Henry Peach Robinson, pioneer of the photomontage and the artistic photography in his book *Pictorial Effect in Photography*.

someone else. Then photography becomes a play. Each object and character are meticulously chosen to create a fictitious environment. The use of real objects and persons allows the viewer to immerse himself/herself in this artificial world.

The biggest threat for photography is the potential fraud. Indeed, with the development of new technologies and powerful software, many photographs have now been edited before being published. The creation of software such as Photoshop or Lightroom has facilitated the manipulation of images. However, the photomontage is not something new. Twenty years after the creation of photography and soon after the invention of the negative film, a photo of Abraham Lincoln was rigged; his head being placed on the body of another politician, John Calhoun (image 40).

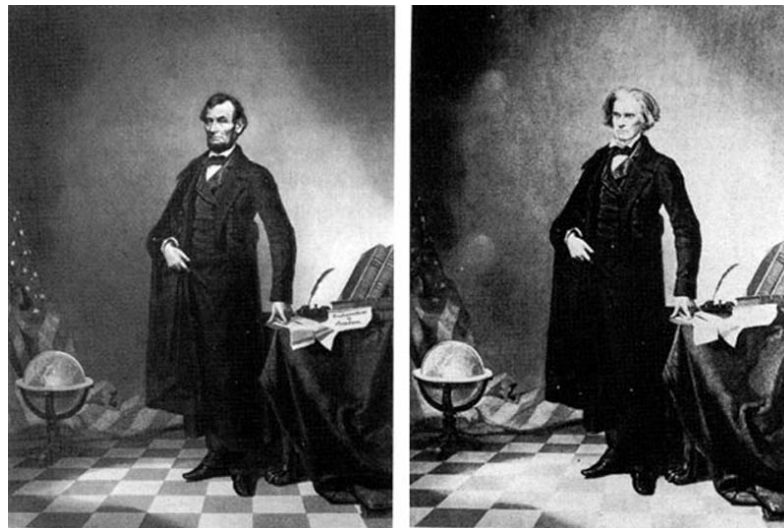


Image 40: Photomontage of Abraham Lincoln and John Calhoun pictures (1860), Thomas Hicks ⁸⁸

It is true that the arrival of digital photography has democratized the photo editing. Nevertheless, some media outlets (Reuters, AFP, Geo, among others) dismiss photographers who use photomontage or even light editing. Others use unscrupulous editing, sometimes to sell, sometimes to clumsily illustrate an article or better showcase. In the process of each

⁸⁸ Hicks (1860). *Photomontage of Abraham Lincoln and John Calhoun pictures*. [Online image]. Available at <https://iconicphotos.org/2010/04/24/lincoln-calhoun-composite/>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

photographer, it is necessary to define what can be authorized or not, where the treatment stops and where the editing begins.

The phenomenon of photo editing has spread from the year 2000 onwards, and assumed the scale and proportion of a vast collective cultural event. In 2008 most of the photos of ordinary people on the Facebook were edited. Indeed, this method is highly used in fashion and commercial photography. Today 100% of the published images are modified.

With a view to understanding the proportion of editing in the advertising industry, I will examine L'Atelier Mai 98 as an example. The digital editing is part of the project of creation and the studio does not hide it. If we visit the studio's website, we can notice that there is a section called "la retouche", which literally means editing in French.⁸⁹ We can read on this page:

Our own editor is responsible for the set of edited materials.

For us, editing consists in developing a subject while respecting its spirit, its essence, its character.

The editor makes substantial and extremely delicate changes - correcting imperceptible defects for neophytes, playing with light, modifying contrasts, driving the look to what is essential.⁹⁰

Nowadays, taking pictures represent only 50% of the photographer's job. After each shooting pictures have to be selected and then edited to clean them up and to create a real ambiance.

The field of activity of an editor may seem *a priori* more circumscribed than that of a photographer. According to the number of pictures and the amount of modifications to make, a two-day shooting corresponds to one week dedicated to editing. The introduced subtleties can have a considerable impact on the final cost. The work of editing is very important since it must transcribe the spirit of the photographer and the client's expectations without modifying the essence of the photograph. Many editors practice their work in an agency. The level of technical requirement is high. After several years of experience and notoriety,

⁸⁹ See Atelier Mai 98. "La retouche". Available at <http://ateliermai98/retoucheurs/.com>. Last viewed on 15/09/2017.

⁹⁰ English translation by the student of the original quote "*L'ensemble des retouches sont réalisées par nos propres retoucheurs. Pour nous, retoucher consiste à mettre en valeur un sujet tout en respectant son esprit, son essence, son caractère. Le retoucheur effectue des changements subtils et extrêmement délicats – corriger un défaut imperceptible pour le néophyte, Jouer sur la lumière, modifier les contrastes – de façon à conduire le regard vers l'essentiel.*" available at Atelier Mai 98. "La retouche". Available at <http://ateliermai98.com/>. Last viewed on: 15/09/2017.

an editor can afford to switch to freelance, independent status, just like a photographer. He is not recognized as an artist, but some editors specialized in fashion editing are highly prized by big agencies especially during the fashion weeks.

Editing allows you to change common settings in a photograph (brightness, contrast, colour, white balance) to improve its appearance. It can quickly remove small defects (on a portrait: red eyes, nose, ears in particular). We can see on images 41 and 42 that the modification is not obvious. No elements of the photograph have been deleted or moved. Only the basic parameters, in particular the exposure and the contrast, have been modified in order to focus the spectator's attention on the plate and what it contains. The contours of the image are darkened in order to accentuate this effect. It is called "vignetting".



Image 41 (*left*): Eric Guerrin – original picture, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes⁹¹

Image 42 (*right*): Eric Guerrin - after editing, (2016), Thomas Dhellemmes⁹²

It is also possible to make montages from one or more photographs: deletion of a detail, addition of a person ... It is the case of images 43 and 44. In this montage the goal was to isolate the ring and to recreate a dusty environment. The most difficult part with jewellery

⁹¹ Images from the private collection of Atelier Mai 98.

⁹² *Ibid.*

is to deal with shadows and reflexions. All the elements around the object are reflecting in the ring while taking the picture. The first task of the editor is to clean the ring from any impurity. The object has to be smooth and shining. In this specific case, the stone is the most valuable element of the picture. It must be showcased, so that the customer can see all the stones' subtleties, all its colour reflections and details. The viewer sees the ring of his dreams, perfect, brilliant of exceptional purity. This image is mainly intended for the press and to feed online publications. Nevertheless, the potential customer must go directly to the store to be able to attest the accuracy of the image with respect to the real object.



Image 43 (*left*): Maison Auclert – original picture, (2016), Jeremy Zenou ⁹³

Image 44 (*right*): Maison Auclert – after editing, (2016), Jeremy Zenou ⁹⁴

In order to face this problem of fake reality, the French government decided to impose, from the 1st of October 2017 onwards, the mention "edited photograph" on all photographs for commercial use, “when the body appearance of the mannequins has been modified by software image processing, to refine or thicken their silhouette”. This law only affects human body modification, but this technic is used for every object of consumption. According to the French Ministry of Health,

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

The exposure of young people to normative and unrealistic images of the body lead to a sense of self-depreciation and poor self-esteem that can have an impact on health behaviours," Marisol Touraine said. It is therefore necessary "to act on the image of the body in society to avoid the promotion of inaccessible beauty ideals and to prevent anorexia in young people."⁹⁵

Unfortunately, the editing not only affects commercial and advertising photography. In 2016, the website PetaPixel denounced the excessive editing on Steve McCurry's pictures⁹⁶. Member of important photojournalism agencies, such as Magnum Agency and National Geographic, Steve McCurry is considered as one of most successful travel photographers of his time. His vibrant images have inspired millions, but he has recently been under the fire of Photoshop. If we consider images 45 and 46, we can realize that many elements were either deleted or modified. Two charts and a light pole seem to have been removed. The photographer also modified the brightness and the contrast of his picture, rendering it more attractive visually.



Image 45 (left): Original picture, Steve McCurry⁹⁷
Image 46 (right): Picture after editing, Steve McCurry⁹⁸

⁹⁵ English translation by the student of the original quote available at Lauron (2017). "Décret Photoshop: le signalement des retouches sur les pubs obligatoires en octobre". Available at <http://www.numerama.com/politique/255687-publication-decret-photoshop-pour-signaler-les-photos-retouchees-des-mannequins.html>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

⁹⁶ DL Cade (2016). "Botched Steve McCurry Print Leads to Photoshop Scandal." Available at <https://petapixel.com/2016/05/06/botched-steve-mccurry-print-leads-photoshop-scandal/>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

⁹⁷ McCurry. *Original picture*. [Online image]. Available at <https://petapixel.com/2016/05/06/botched-steve-mccurry-print-leads-photoshop-scandal/>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

⁹⁸ McCurry. *Picture after editing*. [Online image]. Available at <https://petapixel.com/2016/05/06/botched-steve-mccurry-print-leads-photoshop-scandal/>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

The photographer justifies certain alterations by quoting the photographer Ansel Adams, specialist of black and white, who stated that "the negative of a photo is like a musical score, and the draw is its execution". In the digital age, McCurry explains that "every photographer works in post-production on the correction of colours and contrasts, while trying to keep the spirit of an image intact." Faced with "marginal details that are likely to distract" the eye, he advocates the darkening of certain areas.⁹⁹

Unfortunately, Steve McCurry became the "representative" of the opposition movement. This case is not an isolated incident, and many photographers, sometimes even winners of international photographic awards were accused of modifying their photographs to make them "better".¹⁰⁰ The accumulation of different scandals raised the question about ethics in photography and the impact these modifications may have on our perception of the reality as this trend is difficult to control and to evaluate.

3.3 The modification of standards of reality

Images can act as a separating film between the viewer and the world. A risk is to content oneself with the images that we see, and not to go further in search for information, for understanding, avoiding any other type of approach. The effect of reality created by photography may have led one to believe that the image is an emanation of the world. Digital photography will free us from the belief in the effect of reality. "Photography adheres to reality, the digital image takes it off" said Barthes¹⁰¹. The image infantilizes us in the sense that our world is reduced to what we see and to what we can control. "To educate is to help the young man to free himself from his puerility to reach the awareness that the universe is

⁹⁹ See Jardonnet (2016). "Le photojournaliste Steve McCurry tombe dans un panneau cubain". Available at http://www.lemonde.fr/arts/article/2016/05/27/steve-mccurry-a-t-il-utilise-photoshop-a-l-insu-de-son-plein-gre_4927476_1655012.html. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

¹⁰⁰ See Pnafili (2013). "Le laureat du World Press Photo 2013 a-t-il retouché son cliché?" Available at <http://www.slate.fr/culture/72421/laureat-world-press-photo-photoshop>. Last viewed on 25/09/2017.

¹⁰¹ See Melot (2005: 361-365).

not reducible to what he can think of it, that the world and others can resist it, that he does not have absolute power over beings and things”.¹⁰²

The exhibition *Bilder, die Lügen - Images Mensongères*¹⁰³ (2008), organized by the Communication Museum of Bern, questions the objectivity of images and illustrates the issue of the manipulation of and by images. Some 300 examples from the last 100 years illustrate the transformation of the image (manipulation of existing images), the falsification of text and context (manipulation of interpretation), the falsehood with the help of real images (posed images, staged).

Bilder, die Lügen - Images Mensongères does not provide a miracle recipe for images. But it shows ways of questioning and interpreting sources. It reveals the forces in the background, unmask the intentions and objectives of the manipulations and reveals the repercussions of these false images. The exhibition discusses the ethical requirements that should govern the behaviour adopted in relation to the sources and clearly shows one thing: producers and distributors of images are not the only ones to have obligations, consumers also.

The standardization of objects through pictorial images conforms us to a way of thinking and of seeing. People no longer have a critical option of what surrounds them. Why a hamburger should look like this? Why a model should be that tall and thin? The norms imposed by our society are everywhere and unfortunately there are no representative of the reality in which we are living. The image is highly responsible for this visual lie operated by the advertising industry. One of the most criticized examples concerns food. Indeed, it is very rare that the product presented on the packaging is similar to the product that is found on one's plate (image 47). This “cheat” that could be related to false advertising influences negatively our perception of food. Unconsciously we construct an intellectual image of what a hamburger must be, for example. Unfortunately, the reality is quite different.

¹⁰² Translation by the student of the original quote “Éduquer, c’est aider le petit d’homme à se dégager de cet infantile pour accéder à la conscience que l’univers n’est pas réductible à ce qu’il peut en penser, que le monde et les autres peuvent lui résister, qu’il n’a pas le pouvoir absolu sur les êtres et les choses...”

Meirieu (2006). *L’enfant, l’éducateur et la télécommande*, entretiens avec Jacques Liesenborghs, Bruxelles, Editions Labor.

¹⁰³ *Lying images* (translation by the student).



Image 47: Comparison of the McDonald's cheeseburger in advertising and the reality¹⁰⁴

This is due to the repeated and no longer hidden use of culinary styling technics. Culinary styling is an essential step when you want to photograph dishes. Gourmandise is related first to the eyes, then, it develops with the smell and ends with the taste. When you read a cookbook, it is often the photo that will trigger your desire to prepare it or not.

Some techniques described by Angelina Chapin in *The Guardian*¹⁰⁵ show us that food normally used in recipes is systematically replaced by non-edible visual equivalents that give better textures to the photos. She teaches us that milk, for example, rapidly imbibes cereals. These become soft, moving away from the criteria of beauty imposed by exercise. Some culinary stylists have found an alternative that involves using a hair lotion with the consistency close to a sunscreen or white glue to keep the effect of crispness.

As far as the chicken is concerned, culinary stylists focus on the aesthetics of the product, and not on his actual cooking. It is necessary to cook just enough to make the skin look moist, fleshy and juicy. It does not matter if the meat stays raw and bleeding. The taste does

¹⁰⁴ Stevens (2012). *Reality check: A photo showing half a store bought McDonald's burger and one created for advertising purposes*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2162080/McDonalds-Photoshop-video-reveals-menu-burgers-look-like-youre-served.html>. Last viewed on 26/09/2017.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapin (2016). "WD-40 and microwaved tampons: secrets food photography released". Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/jan/04/food-stylist-photography-tricks-advertising#img-1>. Last viewed on 26/09/2017.

not count, and it is also possible to improve the result by brushing the piece with a mixture of water, caramel sauce, and dishwashing.

The consequences of this type of falsification can seem very tiny in the short-term but can create irreparable damage to the long-term kids and teenagers' behaviours as they cannot identify the difference between what is true and what is false. The means used by the media to convey the image of a perfect body have dangerous consequences. Increasingly, young people react by comparing themselves with the models in the advertisements, what affects their self-esteem. Body image is the perception that a person has of his/her physical appearance. A person can have a negative self-esteem by not being attractive, by not accepting his/her body, while another person can have a positive self-esteem, by accepting himself/herself in his/her body. The body image is not only related to the opinion others may have of us. A person with a negative body image can be considered pretty while a person with a positive body image can be considered unattractive by others.

Gayle Bessenoff (2006), a psychology researcher, carried out a research based on a panel of 112 girls of 18 years old in average. Half of these girls had a negative self-esteem, and the other half had a positive self-esteem. Participants were asked to consult advertisements from fashion magazines such as *Vogue* or *Glamour*. Half of the panel received advertising dealing with clothing and fashion, with models, and the other half received advertising from products not putting models forward. After that, participants were asked to complete a series of questionnaires that measured the level of self-esteem and motivation to lose weight. The girls who had seen advertisements showing very thin models had poorer results on these questionnaires, especially those with a negative body image. Women with a low opinion of their physical appearance are more exposed to the risk of a negative effect of media images. They are more likely to compare themselves to models, what amplifies their negative feelings about their bodies. Comparing these models is all the more harmful because these images are not always real, they are often edited by computer, staged by experts in makeup and lighting who work with the models.

Indeed, the pressure imposed by the media on weight and physical appearance has become a real phenomenon of the 2000s. Like the cosmetic surgery and the preoccupation of the self,

slimness has become the inescapable criterion of beauty and boasts everywhere. Most of the time the ideal of beauty found in women's magazines is that of thinness and youth.

It is important to establish the difference between the pressure imposed by the media and cultural standards. To understand this notion Boldly sent a raw portrait of women to Photoshop experts all over the world with the instruction: “Make me beautiful”.¹⁰⁶ In a video, the agency combined all the final results to see the different approaches of each country. The result shows that the actual modifications don’t touch the general shape of the face, but essentially the makeup and the colour of the eyes. We learn, for example, that Germany spends more on makeup than any other European country. It proves that even if it exists different culture standards, beauty actually concerns the appearance and the aesthetics, not the actual body.

New technologies and social media have led people to live virtually. The counterpart of this new way of living is the disappearance of privacy. People try to publicly show the evidence of this success even if it means lying. In 2017, Ditch the Label, decided to focus on cyberbullying and the impact of social re-engineering on social responsibility and non-realization of reality. In a three-minute video¹⁰⁷, the organization denounces how distorted reality is on Instagram. Indeed, instead of enjoying the present moment, some people get satisfaction from the “like” they receive. We observe in a sort of snowball effect the publication of images through which everybody tries to show the best picture and the best life. The video well shows that the reality is totally different. By framing only what you want to publish, you can react to your own virtual life, and show in appearance an ideal environment. Indeed, the modification of reality standards is not only due to the advertising industry, but it is also an individual issue. As Susan Sontag claims:

Whatever the moral claims made on behalf of photography, its main effect is to convert the world into a department store or museum-without-walls in which every subject is depreciated into an article of consumption, promoted into an item for aesthetic appreciation. Through the camera people become customers or tourists of reality—or *Réalités*. (1977: 137)

¹⁰⁶ Boldly, “Beauty Standards Around the World”. Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 28 June 2014. Web. 11/09/2017.

¹⁰⁷ Ditch the Label, “Are You Living an Insta Lie? Social Media Vs. Reality”, Online video clip, Youtube. Youtube, 20 February 2017. Web. 11/09/2017.

4. Between commercial and artistic photography

4.1 Where/When does art begin in photography?

The status of photography in art is ambiguous and many photographers are claiming that the commercial or journalistic nature of their work should be judged as "artistic". They are encouraged by curators of art photography who periodically discover artistic value in such works, so that photojournalists, such as Henri Cartier-Bresson and W. Eugene Smith, and artists, see their work entering museums and being the object of transactions between merchants and collectors. It seems that no photographic genre can escape this. There is now a strong tendency to take fashion photography seriously.

After having struggled so much with painting at its beginnings, artistic photography made a place on art markets, exhibitions, and among collectors, where it acquired its nobility. But the advent of the digital has somewhat upset the situation and provoked a very pronounced wait-and-see reaction.

In this chapter we are not going to explain which picture is artistic or not. This question is very subjective and I assume it cannot be answered. The understanding of art is depending on each individual and each sensibility. Nevertheless, it is important to define what art in general is (and not only in photography) to better understand the challenges of this debate. Art refers, on the one hand, to the ability of the artist to master all the techniques he/she implements in his/her creative process. This definition is hard to hold in our century, but in the past it took years of experience and long years alongside those who know before being able to be a sculptor, painter, or photographer. In etymological terms, "Art" is related to the Latin word "ars" meaning art, skill, or craft.¹⁰⁸

The digitalization was a revolution. Because digital techniques have enabled some artists to bring something new to their creations as part of their artistic approach, these techniques have made it possible for the majority of people to easily generate millions of photos, most of them without any research, often even without the slightest sensitivity, thus diluting the photograph itself. Art is above all creation, through certain techniques certainly, but especially at the level of the mechanism of thought and imagination, a representation through

¹⁰⁸ Marder (2017). "Ways of Defining Art". Available at <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-definition-of-art-182707>. Last viewed on 04/10/2017.

the vision of the artist, perceptible by the senses of the spectator of the work. One can even speak of spiritual enrichment in the search for the understanding of this work. Art is therefore not only aesthetic, and even today it has a social vocation, by describing and expressing an understanding of the world and its interpretations that allow the human being to take a look at his/her own humanity.

This difference between aesthetics and art is essential in order to understand what art can be or not. Departing from its definition, photography cannot be content to be beautiful to be considered artistic. Today many of the photos in the magazines, including fashion photographs are understood in this way. This being so, can one ask a professional photographer to take non-elegant photographs? The profession of photographer is a craft like the others that is learnt through codes and techniques. The fact that photography is harmonious does not make it a work of art. Today most professional photographers differentiate their so-called "commercial" work from their more independent work. The difference lies mainly in the freedom of expression during the photographic process. Commercial photography includes a contract. The photographer is commissioned by a company to visually transcribe what the client wishes to express. The freedom given to the photographer is more or less important depending on the confidence the company has in the photographer.

Finally, the message is the most important parameter in photography. How can commercial photography be considered artistic when its goal is to sell a product?

The photographer Lukas Wassmann is a 35 years old Swiss fashion photographer. Among his clients are fashion brands such as Adidas, Armani, Bernhard Willhelm, BMW, Christian Dior, Hermes, Tod's, Valentino, Kanye West, Nike and Victoria Beckham. His work has been published in several magazines, like *Art Review*, *Interview*, *Pinup*, *Vogue*, and *032c*. However, his artistic universe seems far from the world of fashion. Indeed, Lukas is a nature lover. By depicting hunters, fishermen, carpenters, his photographs mostly immortalize the wild life and his relation with green spaces.

In his book *L* (2012)¹⁰⁹, Lukas Wassmann (images 48 and 49) presented pictures of him and his friends in his environment. His pictures represent his daily life and associate staging with

¹⁰⁹ The book *L* was rewarded by the Swissdesignaward in 2013.

spontaneity in various places in the Swiss landscape. We read this book as if we are reading a novel about his life, and we are carried away by this reading. Recently, more and more artists combine different pictures together like diptychs and words by series. Photography is no longer individual. The value of the work is assessed by its whole and no longer by the individuality of the photos. This process allows artists to create a complete and complex universe and environment. It also allows artists to build up their imagination and creativity.



Image 48 (*left*): L, (2012), Lukas Wassmann ¹¹⁰

Image 49 (*right*): L, (2012), Lukas Wassmann ¹¹¹

In 2017 Wassmann participated in the latest G Star advertising campaign for the collection created with the American singer Pharrell Williams. As we can see in images 50 and 51 the collection was inspired mostly by camouflages and traditional patterns from all over the world. Most brands try to contract photographers that have the same artistic universe to keep a coherence in the production process.

Artistic photography does not only deal with the aesthetic; it has to bring a new vision to reality. More than a representation of what we see, it has to highlight a concept and make the viewer think. As we can see on the two pictures below, Wassmann gives an extra value to the final shoot. The picture is a combination between the brand image and the artist work. Both are working together in order to bring the viewer into an imaginary world. Nevertheless, the photographer is not entirely free to develop his artistic style, he has to

¹¹⁰ Wassmann (2012). L. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lukaswassmann.com/pictures/105>. Last viewed on 04/10/2017.

¹¹¹ Wassmann (2012). L. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lukaswassmann.com/pictures/124>. Last viewed on 04/10/2017.

follow guidelines according to the brand requirements. This conclusion is explained by the fact that the image's purpose is to sell what the models are wearing and not to present an alternative or a solution to the social facts. Therefore, there is a difference between a professional work and an artistic work.



Image 50 (left): GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg, (2017), Lukas Wassmann¹¹²
 Image 51 (right): GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg, (2017), Lukas Wassmann¹¹³

In any event, photographers, regardless of the type of work they are doing, may want to seek recognition as artists, and we sometimes suspect that photographers produced their images in such a way to correspond to a specific artistic style. When this happens techniques, the composition or the general atmosphere may be affected. Pirkle Jones and Ruth-Marion Boruch, for example, organized an exhibition of photographs about the death of a city in California: condemned shops, deserted streets, and a closed bank. Margery Mann (1964) wrote, a few months later, a glowing critique of this exhibition, a letter to the editor of the magazine expressing the feeling of being wronged. Having travelled to the city in question,

¹¹² Wassmann (2017). *GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lukaswassmann.com/pictures/31>. Last viewed on 04/10/2017.

¹¹³ Wassmann (2017). *GStar raw SS17 / Styling Mel Ottenberg*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.lukaswassmann.com/pictures/30>. Last viewed on 04/10/2017.

she had discovered that, just beside the dying downtown, there was a brand new and flourishing city centre, with a new branch of the bank that had closed, two car dealers and other obvious signs of prosperity. It seems that the photographers had succumbed to an "artistic" fascination for nostalgic stories about the disappearance of the Western old days. It is not a criticism of the photographs nor even the assertion that they are not true: it is the mere observation that it is impossible, based solely on them, to conclude that this city was about to die. One can only address one reproach to the photographers: they have hinted that this conclusion can be drawn from it. The desire to make "art" can lead photographers to remove details that contradict their artistic conception. This conception may in itself be perfectly admissible, but it invalidates the possibility of using these photographs as evidence to draw certain conclusions.

This is the fear that many social scientists have. This fear is justified and it concerns not only photographs in general or photographs made with artistic intention. Artistic intent conflicts with the documentary use of photography because it affects the choice and presentation of details. This explains why things are not shown; why certain details are accentuated to the detriment of others, (thus suggesting certain relations and conclusions without really giving reason to believe in them); the choice of the light or the type of print through which details are presented (with a view to evoking an atmosphere rather than another). Taking a photograph, whether for an artistic purpose or to present evidence in court implies doing all that. In other words, there are issues that worry any photographer. Moreover, any verbal material poses the same problems, since the production of a written or oral testimony is also shaped by the intended audience, which necessitates an interpretation or understanding of this testimony accordingly. Knowing that the photographer has artistic intentions does not disqualify his work as proof: one can still decide that a conclusion is true.

4.2 Interview with Thomas Dhellemmes – professional photographer

In an interview during my experience at Atelier Mai 98, photographer Thomas Dhellemmes was able to give me his opinion about art and photography and about his motivations as a professional photographer. The image for him is an essential means of human creation's expression for him. Through his work, Dhellemmes expresses his thoughts, doubts and emotions and shares them with others. His thoughts allowed me to have a new perspective

on the profession of photographer in general and especially on the importance of modern photography.

After studying at the National School of Applied Arts and Crafts of Art (ENSAAMA, Paris), Thomas Dhellemmes chose to express himself through photography. He moved to Cape Verde where the French Cultural Centre exhibited his works. Thomas Dhellemmes was awarded a number of prizes and scholarships. In 1998 he founded a studio specializing in luxury and the art of living. Regularly solicited by many gastronomy professionals (chefs, publishers, editors of magazines, etc.) he decided to create a department specifically dedicated to the culinary image. Thomas Dhellemmes is active both in the advertising and publishing sectors. He wrote many books in collaboration with great French chefs. He also worked on photographic reportages for magazines.

Concerning his personal works, Thomas Dhellemmes is influenced by his passion for nature. Exploring the diversity of the world, refusing strict categories, his work focuses on the objects and materials he encounters, with a contemporary and timeless look. Several photographic books have already been published, notably *Bois et Livres* (2000), a translation of the intimate and the emotional. In 2015, Thomas Dhellemmes proposed to explore the old and forgotten vegetables of the castle of Versailles through a polaroid in his book *Légumineux*, word game between “Légume – vegetable” and “Lumière – Light”.

Why did you create l'Atelier Mai 98?

During my early career I worked for more than ten years with Studios Oasis as an employee. This studio was specialized in weddings, portraits and advertisements. My 40 years old were approaching and it was necessary to give a new breath to my activity of photographer. I wanted to be independent and integrate new technologies and a young vision in my work. I am always searching for innovation associated to “Art de Vivre”. My style was very different from Studio Oasis and unfortunately our ambitions were not the same.

Atelier Mai 98 is a studio I built on my image. Located in Bois-Colombes (a suburb in North-West of Paris) we are specialized in luxury advertising. We are today working for internationally well-known brands such as Chanel, Boucheron, Roche Bobois, etc. It is a

very demanding field that demands technic and, something even more important, a certain sensibility.

What is the role and the importance of photography in luxury?

Pictures more than any other media tell a story. Taking pictures is not only about representing an object to sell it to a client. It contributes to the global image of the brand. With all the new technologies and the technics created since the creation of photography we are now able to build a specific visual universe. The first role of a picture is to deliver a message but also to make people dream. It is a journey into an image made up by the company. People feel attracted by shared values they have with the brand.

The message transmitted by the photograph has a real importance especially in the luxury market in which we are offering a unique experience. It is the world of elegance, charm, beauty and delicacy.

How do your personal projects differ from your work at Atelier Mai 98?

In 2004 my life as a photographer began to shift away from lifestyle and decoration, and to move toward cooking. I have a strong relation with alimentation and nature. It is from where I draw my inspiration. During the weekend I try as much as I can to escape from the stress of Paris. To create our own artistic style is to find yourself. It is the expression of your deep feelings and thoughts. I essentially use Polaroid photography because like our memories they disappear with time. There is an aspect of obliteration. Nowadays, people take a multitude of digital images because there are no limits. They don't need to think before taking the shot, but in this case it is the opposite of a superficial snapshot image. There is a complex and slow working process during which time is important. I like to make researches before taking a shot. My images are not seen on a computer, but in a book so they can be studied and understood as a whole.

In my artistic projects I do what I want and what I like. There is no pressure from a third party. I can control the whole project and manage to the final result as I want to shape it.

The concept of commercial photography is totally different, since it always aims to sell something (product, service...). A company hires you to produce something and pay for the work you do. The contract is limited in terms of time, budget and artistic direction. Talking about artistic direction doesn't mean it is artistic. It corresponds to the style that the client wants for his picture. Some clients are more demanding than others, what can restrain your creativity.

Does artistic photography have a link with liberty of expression or creativity?

It depends on the contract. Sometimes, the brand gives “cartes blanches” to the photographer to imagine the photo-shoot and the style of the pictures. It happens when the photographer has a very specific artistic style. In this case the photographer is entirely free and can express himself/herself on his/her work, but most of times marketing takes over, framing the creative / artistic message. The artistic decisions are taken before by the communication or marketing teams. The photographer is in this case just the executor of the work asked. The photographer can still give his/her opinion and technical expertise on the project but it won't make a significant change.

Can a picture be commercial and artistic?

It may become so, according to historians of photography, only time will tell. At a short-term period, it is highly linked to the freedom of expression the photographer has during the shooting. Let's take the example of the last Nike campaign pictured by David Uzochukwu, a young Belgian photographer.

At a long-term perspective, commercial photography can become artistic according to its historical value to represent a certain period or artistic movement. Indeed, style and norm are not exempt from advertising imagery. Trends are moving through the age and adapting to society. Commercial photography is influenced by the development of technics and of social networks in particular. People do not have the same approach toward consumerism as they had in the 1960s.

What do you want to express in your artistic work?

In my artistic work I am looking for an aspect that is separate from time. At first glance, some people wonder whether my pictures are paintings or photos. Polaroid 600 has an interesting grain and texture that make the images look more like a painting; they cover their track. These images are more ambiguous. It is not obvious at first what they are like. I simplify everything as much as possible, so that the setting does not interfere with the subject. The square format brings real balance. Having to choose between a horizontality and verticality would already reveal a specific intention.

I am also obsessed with the question of our passing on earth. We enter this world and we disappear. To do what? In *Légumineux* I simply choose the most expressive subjects. I am trying to leave a tangible trace of temporary passage on this earth. Sometimes pictures are a journey through my memories more or less distant. This colour is closely linked to dream, wisdom, serenity and it opens the horizons.

Should a picture be real? Which part of responsibility does photography have on reality?

Reporting photography or photojournalism must be real and impartial. Its goal is to point out a social event or issue happening in our society. The idea people will have about this event will depend on the work of the photographer. His/her interpretation from him should change the work's impact on history.

Author's photography or artistic photography moves away from a reality. There is a different reality, truth and dream, which for me are the most important. They explore other realities in order to break the barrier of our restricted world. I believe that people can create and present something different than no one did before. It is also the way for the artist to talk and say loudly what he thinks. Each person has his own perception of reality. Photography can be compared to literature. You have an article that transcribes what is happening and you have a novel or a science fiction book which develops a fictive story sometimes close or sometimes far from the reality. The most important is the message and the intention behind the picture in itself. Photography can, thus, also make people dream and see what they have never seen before.

4.3 The experimentation of realities

Photography has the power to express temporality in many different ways, that our eyes cannot grasp in reality. All photography exists at the time of its exposure and disappears after it. It works with diverse temporalities, such as: expressed time, symbolic time, suggested time, reading time, figurative time, time of discovery. The time of exposure needed for a photograph to have impact on our senses is different from actual time. Photographic time is a derealisation of the time of life. It is the alteration of the perception or experience of the external world that appears strange, unreal, and external. Certain notions of existence and physical concepts are questioned by photography. Derealisation is in a way an experimentation of a metaphysical doubt. From a photography point of view, it corresponds to the reconstruction of a reality devoid of meaning and landmarks.

The terms used in photography are hunting terms such as “take”, “shoot”, “burst”, “target”, “sight”, “collimator”, “aim”, among others. Even the hanging of our photos with which we adorn the walls can represent trophies.

This feeling of total power, this impression that we have succeeded in making the visual elements comply with our interpretation of reality, constitute a way to use violence towards what surrounds us. The photographer is not a contemplative. Photography is a vivisection of reality to subdue the world around us to our own desires. Photography, despite what has been imposed on it, is not content with representing the real. It allows the viewer to discover and specially to make one discover the invisible. Indeed, the reality of our world goes far beyond what we see.

Sight is one of our five senses, and the eye plays a central role to its development. It is through the eye that the image passes, and it is through the eye that the image is transmitted to the brain by the optical nerves. The function of the eye is therefore to receive and transform the electromagnetic vibrations of light into nerve impulses. The human eye captures the light radiation of certain wavelengths: 390 nm (ultraviolet) and 700 nm (infrared).¹¹⁴ Moreover, the eye has the faculty of adapting itself to the intensity of light:

¹¹⁴ La photo En faits (2012). “Comparaison entre l'oeil et l'appareil photo”. Available at <http://www.la-photo-en-faits.com/2012/10/vision-humaine-appareil-photo.html>. Last viewed on 12/10/2017.

thus, one perceives with the same sensibility an image when the sun is high or under the light of the full moon. By definition, the human eye is not omniscient.

The ocular performance corresponds to the degree of perfection attained by the image formed on the retina and that result from the light reflected by the object into the eye. It allows animals to appreciate the luminosity, shape, dimensions, position in space and possibly colours and movements. In other words, the ocular performance is the quality of the vision brought back to the ocular stage, and the final vision depends on the quality of the optical fibres and the aptitude of the visual centres are largely involved in the process.

Even if this performance entails several elements, I stress four that are essential: (i) sharpness, so that at a point of the object corresponds to a point of the image; (ii) resolution, which is the smallest distance separating two object points capable of giving two distinct image points; (iii) contrast, that is the reproduction of the difference resulting from the illumination of the distinct surfaces and possibly of their colours; and (iv) the movements of the whole object or of some of its parts.

Visual capacities vary according to breeds and the animal species. They depend on the biological necessity of each species. Indeed, the acuteness of birds of prey, for example, is far more developed than that of humans, so that birds can see their preys from the sky.

The notion of colour also differs among animals.¹¹⁵ The visible light spectrum can be more or less limited depending on the species. For example, dogs and cats see in dull tones, mostly yellow, brown and blue, and have a wider peripheral vision than ours, whereas fish see red, green and blue, in a "fisheye" style.¹¹⁶ However, they can see better in dark environments especially at night, which help them to hunt. We can also observe differences in the human being. Several people, because of an ocular disease, see objects and colours differently. The name of this genetic anomaly is deuteranopia, an abnormality of vision that affects the perception of colours (image 52). Its genetic origin is due to a deficiency of one or more of the three types of cones of the ocular retina. It does not modify the perception of form or

¹¹⁵ For more information, see Monu (2014). "How do animals see colours? How is their vision different from humans?" Available at <https://www.quora.com/How-do-animals-see-colors-How-is-their-vision-different-from-humans>. Last viewed on 12/10/2017.

¹¹⁶ The term "Fisheye" is used in photography to make reference to a photographic lens with a very short focal length and, therefore, a very large field angle of up to 180 °. It creates a distortion that strongly curves all straight lines and creates a spherical effect at the centre of the image.

space, but just the colorimetric spectrum. In daily life, blue is associated to coldness and red to warmth. Someone suffering from deuteranopia will not make the same associations.



Image 52: Difference between normal vision and deuteranopia ¹¹⁷

The camera has often been considered the third human eye. With the development of new cutting-edge technology, it has allowed to get closer or to exceed the performances of the human eye. The eye is of course more powerful than the camera in terms of dynamics, but the difference is not as huge. The iris and diaphragm of the camera are not quite comparable, but almost. The eye has for the camera a dual role: on one hand, it adjusts the amount of light that goes in, and, on the other, it optimizes the optical quality.

The camera, contrary to the eye, allows the adjustment of different parameters independently and isolates the elements that we want to make visible. This process makes it possible to highlight existing elements of our reality, and that are often invisible to the naked eye. By revealing the real nature of our world, the camera somehow creates an alternative reality to human capabilities. Some artists have devoted their work to the representation of the invisible moved by the belief that nothing in the world or in what surrounds us is fixed and can be considered as the “truth”.

The German artist Martin Klimas has succeeded in combining the ephemeral moment of the break with a successful aesthetic enterprise. In the *Porcelain Figurines* series (images 53 and 54), Martin Klimas drops porcelain figurines from a height of 3 meters, causing a series

¹¹⁷ Colour Blind Awareness. *Difference between normal vision and deuteranopia*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.colourblindawareness.org/colour-blindness/types-of-colour-blindness/>. Last viewed on 12/10/2017.

of photographic shots triggered at very high speed at the moment of the impact on the ground. This moment invisible to the naked eye is materialized through photography.

Klimas insists on his curiosity to produce a transforming subject that we cannot perceive in normal everyday life. Thanks to its technical device, Klimas grabs a figurine in weightlessness, in an intermediate state, in which both stop and movement coexist. As far as his pictures are concerned, Martin Klimas (Rosecrans, 2007) states:

In my pictures you see the world through the eye of a high-speed camera. This way of seeing provides for us something that we normally cannot see, this moment of transformation can really only be imagined by us. I provide a way for us to see this action differently. It is an in-between state. A state where rest and motion can exist together. I hope this situation can be applied and give us thought in our everyday world.



Image 53 (left): Porcelain Figurines, (2004), Martin Klimas ¹¹⁸

Image 54 (right): Porcelain Figurines, (2004), Martin Klimas ¹¹⁹

In his work *The Enclave*, photographer Richard Mosse, winner of the Deutsche Börse photography prize, explores the boundaries of the visible on the battlefield. For three years, he wished to report, in his own way, the brutal conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thanks to an infrared photo film developed by Kodak in the 1940s for military use, he has been able to photograph the soldiers in their environment.

At the crossroads between contemporary art and photojournalism the images of Mosse seem almost unreal: the vegetation that they capture takes a monochrome colour, a rose that turns

¹¹⁸ See Klimas (2011). *Steve Reich and Musicians, Drumming*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.martin-klimas.de/de/index.html>. Last viewed on 10/10/2017.

¹¹⁹ See Klimas (2004). *Untitled*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.martin-klimas.de/de/index.html>. Last viewed on 10/10/2017.

to fuchsia. The image captures the radiations below the light often materialized by the camel emitted by a body (images 55 and 56). The chromatic disjunction makes it possible to show the tragedy of the Congolese conflict from another angle, cheerier in appearance but terrible in reality. The artist wants us to discover what is perhaps no longer visible. The final result creates a fairy atmosphere far from the war landscape. The spectator is caught between two worlds that normally never coincide. We do not know very well whether we should be cheerful or sad at the sight of these photographs.



Image 55 (*left*): *The Enclave*, (2014), Richard Mosse ¹²⁰

Image 56 (*right*): *The Enclave*, (2014), Richard Mosse ¹²¹

Digital art has opened new doors to artistic creation by offering new media of visual expression and new tools to the artist. Since its creation, photography has always been a bridge between reality and fiction, leaving us sometimes the doubt about the existence of an objective reality. Today we can create any reality thanks to computers. The image comes to life in the screen that generates it by reading its code. Indeed, digital photography appears as the result of a captured image transformed into a computer code that our computers give

¹²⁰ Mosse (2014). *The Enclave*. [Online image]. Available at <http://www.konbini.com/fr/inspiration-2/richard-mosse-guerre-rose/>. Last viewed on 10/10/2017.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

us back through dedicated software. The computer creates the image, but as a result from errors that the tool may experience, it can also falsify it. The error being human, it is reassuring to find even today in the tools that we use a part of humanism in the contemporary virtual world.

In his Series *1.0: Reality Aberration* (images 57 and 58) the photographer Adrien David discusses these numerical errors by revealing the foundations of the image by altering the code or by processes derived from the current Glitch. Through this passage, through computer science, the photographs presented are no longer the reflection, the representation of an existing reality, but they undergo their own constructions revealing an aestheticization of imperfection.



Image 57 (left): 1.0: Aberration de réalité, (2017), Adrien David ¹²²
Image 58 (right): 1.0: Aberration de réalité, (2017), Adrien David ¹²³

In his artistic work Dhellemmes always tries to tell the story of an unreal universe. The contribution of his personal experience allows the viewer to gain a foothold in an imaginary world based on his own reality. In his series *17 Juillet* created with black and white polaroids, Dhellemmes invites people into his memories. The deteriorated aspect of the photographs

¹²² David, (2017). *1.0: Aberration de réalité*. [Online image]. Available at <http://blooecole.com/item/adrien-david/>. Last viewed on 10/10/2017.

¹²³ *Ibid*

suggests they were taken a few decades ago, even if they represent recent moments of his life.

We travel through images as if in a deconstructed dream, without guidelines. Everyone can get his/her own idea of what about he/she sees. This series plays between the "said" and the "unsaid" and brings each one back to his/her own existence. We see what we want by letting our imagination freely run. Only the artist knows exactly what happened and he indirectly allows the viewer to enter into his intimacy.



Image 59 (*top left*): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes ¹²⁴

Image 60 (*top right*): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes ¹²⁵

Image 61 (*bottom left*): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes ¹²⁶

Image 62 (*bottom right*): 17 juillet, (2017), Thomas Dhellemmes ¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Dhellemmes, (2017). *17 juillet*. [Online image]. Available at <https://www.thomasdhellemmes.fr/17juillet>. Last viewed on 10/10/2017.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

Art exists above all to precisely make us escape from reality by arousing in the spectator emotions in the face of an image, a sculpture, and so on. The principal aim of art would therefore be to entertain us, to make us escape from our everyday life, and even to make us truly aware of this daily life. It allows us to focus on things that we do not necessarily pay attention to or that are temporal, and that the artist records over time.

Some artists (essentially contemporary artists) play with the reality of the photographic image and its ability to produce an abstraction and to fit into an arrangement. The notion of arrangement refers to the artist's process of working with images and, on the other hand, to a form of organization which favours a diversity of relations between images.

Given that artistic expression can take different forms, it is unclassifiable and most important it cannot be ranked. It is difficult to classify one artist's work as better than another, especially if the messages transmitted are different. Each individual can transcribe his perception of the reality without damaging the standards settled down by our society. Art in photography is a way of opening up different visions and of providing reflection on our environment. Without this message and this desire for questioning, photography is reduced only to a simple aesthetic object, which simply allows the viewer to experience a visual pleasure.

Conclusion

Since its creation, photography has struggled to find a place in the world of art. It has long been rejected by the artistic community and some of the intellectual elite. In France, the painter Delacroix expressed his doubts about the relationship between art and the machine, saying that "the artist risked becoming a machine harnessed to another machine". According to him, it was important to build a bulwark against his possible claim to acquire an artistic status. At the end of the nineteenth century, *Le Mercure de France*, a French magazine created in 1972, produced an "Investigation into the novel illustrated by photography". Those who replied, among whom Zola, Mallarmé and Pierre Louÿs, refused to grant the photograph an artistic status, and only accepted it could have a possible documentary role.

128

However, Talbot published a book called *The Pencil of Nature* (1844)¹²⁹, considered as the first book of photographs of history, with explanations, remarks and comments whose major interest lies in the affirmation of the birth of a totally new art. This new art was supposed to deliver "hand-printed images of nature" and resulted from "the only action of light on sensitized paper": It produced images called calotypes that, in a note on one of the copies of his book, he calls "words of light". *The Pencil of Nature* is not just a book of photographs. It associates remarkable images with major texts and brings to the medium many facets, so that one agrees to consider photography as being equal to the other media enacted by the Beaux-Arts of the time (painting, music, sculpture).

Sometimes, images go beyond their initial goal. They exceed the strict framework of their qualification to become works of art. This is particularly true for reportage photography, which is much less a slave to its medium, for example, than commercial photography. The photographs of Michael Ackerman or of Paolo Pellegrin are considered "legends" by the photographic community, but the press will rarely publish them. Because the fundamental difference of the photo as art is that it is not intended to illustrate anything.

¹²⁸ See Grujnowski (2002: 126-132)

Today photography “enters” museums with the approval of those whose job is to preserve art. Suspended on their walls, photography recovers the aura of the lost artwork. But what gives it such relevance is that it has become a means of expression for the hundreds of millions of amateurs (the visual generation). In 1975, major American cities opened galleries that were dedicated to photography. In 1975 there were 30 galleries in New York, in 1979 more than 117 (Freud, 1974: 200). More than 400 photographic exhibitions have taken place in the United States and, since then, important collections of photographs have been exhibited in museums. In 1978, during the transformation of the Orsay train station into a museum, the institution was the first in France to make the decision to create a section exclusively dedicated to photographic art. Indeed, at that time no museum of Fine Arts in France had a department dedicated to photography yet. This unusual choice conducted to the change of traditional patterns of art in the twentieth century since no distribution channels were organize in France or abroad for photography.

Among current trends, we can distinguish two major movements. On the one hand, we have photographers for whom the image is a means of expressing the concerns of our time. They feel concerned about human and social problems. On the other hand, for other photographers photography is a way to realize their personal artistic aspirations. In both cases, photography can be creative or a simple craft. Defining what is artistic or not is a trivial matter since photography refers to the feelings and involvement of the photographer and the viewer. Each image has its own discourse and is limitless in terms of creation. In 1920, for example, Hearfield invented the photomontage to denounce the reactionary character of the ruling class. He wisely used photographs to juxtapose them and create a new meaning for the whole. By proceeding in this way, he showed that photography was not confined to its time and context, but that it was alive.

Thanks to photography, humanity has acquired the power to see its surroundings and its existence with new eyes. Any photographer has a great social responsibility. He/She must work with the technical means at his/her disposal. Photography is not only a way to discover reality. Nature seen by the camera is different from the nature seen by the human eye. The camera influences our way of seeing and creates the new mind.¹³⁰ As Gisèle Freud (1974:

¹³⁰ Kostelanetz (1970).

205) puts it, “photography has been the starting point for the mass media, which today play an all-powerful role as a means of communication. Without it, there would have been no cinema or television”. In recent years, texts and exhibitions have come together to consider the definition of “after photography”, an era characterized by the dissolution of photography as we have understood it so far: a synthetic, mixed, and hybridized image that appropriates elements, such as drawings, paintings, texts, graphics, that are digitally mixed by computer programs.

From a personal point of view, this reflection on the essence of photography allowed me to refine my judgment about the impact of the practice of photography in our everyday life. Today, no one denies photography a place among the graphic arts. As Kostelanetz (1970) explained, Moholy considered that the image has its own aesthetics, and it has managed to break its will to imitate painting. Because of its history, photography is destined to evolve rapidly with its environment and we are witnessing an inverse movement in the painting that strives to create art by using photography. Photography still has a demonstrative role, but it is also the art of making the invisible appear in the apparent. Through a technical device and a practical arrangement, it ensures the appearance of what is no longer or what is not.

W.T. Mitchell in his book *What do pictures want?* centres his reflection on the purpose of the image. The theorist analyses the impact of advertising images, and especially propaganda, to understand, from an anthropological point of view, how imagery is used as a tool for conveying ideas or values. As an example, he chooses an American illustration created by James Montgomery Flagg named “I want you” for the recruitment of soldiers in 1917. This illustration was widely diffused in the American press during the Second World War. Photography is, in fact, more than just an aesthetic object. The posture of seduction liberally attributed to the image supports the structure of both cultural and material consumption. The image directly affects the feelings and this fact unconsciously affects the decisions made by our society. In the advertising industry, “deep psychologists”¹³¹ are used to study the reactions of men in front of the public. They know from psychoanalysis that the unconscious is peopled with images that have a profound influence on behaviour. In this

¹³¹ Term used by Gisèle Freud (1974 : 205)

context, photography and the image in general should be examined, so that we can understand the future challenges of a visual society.

Thanks to my experience at Atelier Mai 98, I have been able to meet and discuss photography with different actors of the luxury market, the publishing industry, the art and cultural industry and professional photographers. Each one shared their expertise and their point of views concerning the role of the image and especially photography with me. Unfortunately, the consequences of the images on reality cannot be simply measured by the image itself. In order to complete the reflection proposed by W.T. Mitchell we should ask what the viewer wants and what the photographer wants.

The photographer unlike the viewer is the one who triggers the photo. He/she has the ability to choose what he wants or does not want to show. This notion is very important since, as a privileged witness of the action, he/she sees everything that is happening with his/her own eyes. The camera in the hands of the photographer is a filter of our reality, and it can never replace the human eye. In his attempt to express his own desire, the photographer must also distance himself/herself from his/her own choices and imagine what people would like to see. The act of photographing somehow involves making choices and in a way giving up something. Photographers' choices must be explained and justified with a view to establishing relationships of trust with spectators and promoting new reflections about the society.

For its part, the viewer must be aware of the fictional aspect that photography can take. Indeed, photography does not only serve to show a reality, it tells a story more or less inspired by reality for a specific purpose. Each photo is accompanied by a context and a speech that the viewer must be able to decipher. This work goes through the education of the population to the visual art and especially to a relationship of trust that must be created between publishers and the public. Everyone must be able to build a critical sense according to his/her pictorial expectations.

Photography is an art that must be shown and that is made to express desires or facts. As a "client" of visual art, the viewer has a decision-making power regarding the quality and the divinity of the images presented to him. He is the one who chooses if he wants to look at an

image or not, and especially if he wants to answer the message sent to him. This awareness can allow everyone to take back their environment and control the consequences. The reality shown by photography is only a reflection of what is or what can be.

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